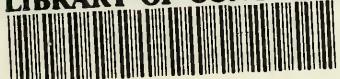


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ARE YOU A MASON?

A FARICAL COMEDY IN
THREE ACTS

543
1895

BY

LEO DIETRICHSTEIN

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CARL HERRMANN

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**DRAMATIS PERSONAE AND ORIGINAL CAST OF
ARE YOU A MASON ?**

As Presented By

MESSRS. RICH AND HARRIS

at Wallack's Theatre, New York City,
Monday Evening, April 1, 1901

GEORGE FISHER.....*Leo Dietrichstein*
Stock broker, formerly actor

FRANK PERRY.....*John C. Rice*
His friend

AMOS BLOODGOOD.....*Thomas A. Wise*
Of Rockford, Ill., Perry's father-in-law

JOHN HALTON.....*George Richards*
A gentleman farmer from up State

HAMILTON TRAVERS.....*Arnold Daly*
Doortender at a cabaret

ERNEST MORRISON.....*Cecil De Mille*
A young architect

POLICEMAN.....*Charles Greene*

MRS. CAROLINE BLOODGOOD.....*May Robson*

EVA ^{(MRS.} PERRY) } HER DAUGHTERS Esther Tittell
ANNIE Nellie Butler

LULU Jeanette Northern

MRS. HALTON.....*Charlotte Lambert*
Halton's wife

LOTTIE.....*Sally Cohen*
Cook to the Perrys

FANCHON ARMITAGE.....*Amy Muller*
A cloak model at Mme. Jolivet's

PLACE OF ACTION:—*Perry's apartment in New York City.*

TIME:—*Friday in the forenoon, Act I.*
Saturday in the afternoon, Acts II and III.

Produced under the stage direction of
Mr. Leo Dietrichstein

ARE YOU A MASON ?

DESCRIPTION OF CHARACTERS

GEORGE FISHER

Good looking young fellow of about 28. Bright and snappy and brimming over with good humor. Must be of the size which will permit him to masquerade convincingly as a girl.

FRANK PERRY

Tall, good-looking man of 30. Must be quite serious although played with a light touch.

AMOS BLOODGOOD

A fat, jolly old fellow between 55 and 60. Very effervescent and full of fun. Grey hair and mid-western clothes.

JOHN HALTON

A typical old "rube" of the husky type. Same age as Amos. Fairly loud clothes.

HAMILTON TRAVERS

Old-time actor. Out-at-elbows clothing. Long grey hair. Clean shaven face with marks of dissipation. Age 55 to 60. Very grand in manner.

ERNEST MORRISON

A very serious, good-looking young fellow of 25. Dressed in up-to-the-minute New York clothes.

POLICEMAN

A burly, loud-voiced New York policeman in uniform.

MRS. CAROLINE BLOODGOOD

A portly, dignified middle-western woman who plainly shows she is boss of the house. She is never harsh but merely a person born to command. She is about 55. She is extremely proud of her husband's Masonic connections and over solicitous for his welfare.

EVA PERRY

A beautiful, tall, radiant young wife of about 25. Dressed in the height of fashion. Sweet, loving and trustful. She plainly shows that she adores her husband.

ANNIE

A sweet, healthy, enthusiastic young girl from the West. Age 21.

LULU

Same as Annie. Age 19.

MRS. HALTON

A buxom farmer's wife. Age 55.

LOTTIE

A typical Irish servant girl of 35. Very snappy and impertinent

FANCHON ARMITAGE

A French girl of 25. Must be same height and a duplicate in appearance to Fisher when he is made up as a girl.

ARE YOU A MASON?

ACT I

(*Sitting-room in PERRY's house according to scene plot. Lively music to take up curtain.*)
(*When curtain rises, PERRY enters from R. I.*)

PERRY (*spick and span as if he had just finished dressing*). Lottie, bring my breakfast in here. (*Perfumes his handkerchief with a spray, which he takes from mantel up L.*)

(Enter LOTTIE FROM R. 2.)

LOTTIE. Mr. Morrison wishes to see you sir.

PERRY (*up c.*). Show him in and hurry up with breakfast.

LOTTIE. What !!!

PERRY. Please.

LOTTIE. Very well, sir.

(Exit R. 2.)

PERRY (*looks at his watch*). Phew! Half-past eleven.

(Enter MORRISON.)

MORRISON. Hello, Perry! (*they meet c., shake hands*).

PERRY. Hello, Morrison! How are you? How are you getting on with the plans?

MORRISON. You can see for yourself—I've brought them with me. (*Unrolls them as he crosses and places them on table R.*)

PERRY (*goes to head of table with him*). Well, I must say that was quick work. (*Looking at them.*) Very good—very practical—just what I want.

MORRISON. I'm glad you're satisfied. I suppose you want us to begin work at once. This is the most favorable time for building.

PERRY (*at table R.*) I dare say. Between you and me, Morrison, I haven't the necessary cash just at present, but I have half a promise from my father-in-law to advance the fifteen or twenty thousand dollars it will cost to build the extension.

MORRISON. Then why not go ahead with the work? I am sure we can get the permit from the building department.

PERRY. I know. What we need is a permit from my mother-in-law—she is the exchequer of the family. (*Looking over plans.*)

MORRISON. Mrs. Bloodgood?

PERRY. Precisely.

MORRISON. What kind of a woman is Mrs. Bloodgood?

PERRY. Morrison, if you must marry—marry an orphan. (*Rise and go C.*)

MORRISON (*laughs*). And I was bent on becoming your brother-in-law.

PERRY. Sorry I spoke. (*Goes R.*) Which one of the blossoms is it?

MORRISON. Lulu. (*Going to C.*)

PERRY. When did that happen?

MORRISON. During their last visit. It was a case of love at first sight.

PERRY. You have my sympathy. Well—er—what do you want me to do? You surely have some reason for confiding in me.

(*Enter LOTTIE with breakfast tray R.2.*)

MORRISON. Exactly. Lulu wrote to me of the possibility of their coming to town early in

the autumn. Of course you are going to entertain them, and I want to tell you that I am going to keep all my time open for your dinners, suppers and theatre parties. Don't be bashful, you can invite me as often as you like.

PERRY. Thank you. (*Shakes his hand. Cross to sofa R.*)

MORRISON. Don't mention it. And about the plans? (*Goes c. with plans.*)

PERRY (*sits at table*). I'll let you know as soon as I hear from our mother-in-law.

MORRISON. (c.) Is that your breakfast?

PERRY. What do you think it is—my supper?

MORRISON (*laughs*). Rather late—I'm almost ready for my luncheon. Good-bye, old man. (*Going from c. up to door R.*) Don't forget me.

(*Exit R. 2.*)

PERRY. All right, I won't. What is this? (*Takes coffee and makes face.*) Is this coffee? —tastes like dish-water. (*Tastes again.*) Are you sure you haven't made a mistake?

LOTTIE. Well, Mr. Perry, whin I gets breakfast ready for eight o'clock, and it's twelve o'clock whin ye ate it, ye must be prepared. This is the fifth toime this morning that I've warmed up this blessed coffee.

PERRY. It tastes like it.

LOTTIE.. Sure, an it's a shame the way things is goin' on here—turnin' night into day and day into night. I do be feelin' ashamed fur livin' in this house—me, that's all me loife has worked fur respectable folks. (*Goes L.*)

PERRY. You can pack your things and go— (*Rise to R. Corner.*)

LOTTIE. I won't pack. I won't go—now make me.

PERRY. I'm master in my own house.

LOTTIE. I was sent here by Mrs. Bloodgood and I will stay until she gives me my notice. You want to get rid of me because I'm on to your little games. While I think of it, you can dine out—I'm in no humour to cook.

(FISHER has appeared at Entrance R. 2.)

FISHER. Hallo, Frank!

PERRY. Hallo! (*Shake hands.*)

FISHER. Don't let me interrupt you, Lottie.
(Cross to C.)

LOTTIE. 'Terrupt me, is it? Do ye suppose I'd be lettin' meself 'terrputed by the loikes of ye?

FISHER. Why Lottie dear!

LOTTIE. Don't ye dear me, sorr.

FISHER. (*bows*). I beg your pardon, Madam.

LOTTIE. Ye can't fool me, sorr—you're one of them kind too.

FISHER. What kind?

LOTTIE. It is you that is leadin' married men asthrawy.

PERRY. Meaning me?

FISHER. Why. Lottie, you are worse than a mother-in-law.

LOTTIE. That's what I am, sure enough—least-ways I stand in the place of one here.

FISHER. Don't be cross, Lottie. (*Passes his arm round her waist.*)

LOTTIE. Hands off. (*Goes to back of table R. leans over and speaks threateningly to PERRY.*)

Just wait till yer wife gets home, Mr. Perry. I

say no more, but (*thumps table*) just wait!

FISHER. (To PERRY). Yes, jist wait till your wife comes home, we'll tell on ye—won't we Lottie?

LOTTIE. Oh ye—jumpin' jack!

(*Exit R. 2*)

(*Two men laugh.*)

PERRY. Have some coffee?

FISHER. Yes, I think I will. (*Comes down.*)

PERRY. No, I'm a friend of yours. Don't touch it.

FISHER. Just like mother used to make.

PERRY. Yes! I always take tea.

FISHER. Was that altercation with your servant part of your daily routine? (*Sits on chair L. of R. table.*)

PERRY. I didn't get much of it this morning —you got some; sorry you didn't come a little sooner, you might have got it all.

FISHER. Oh, I don't mind, but how can you put up with it? Why don't you give her her walking papers?

PERRY. Can't. She's a wedding present. It's bad luck to part with one's wedding gifts.

(*Sits R. of table.*)

FISHER. Who was the generous giver?

PERRY. My mother-in-law. She wanted to give my wife a diamond necklace and a tiara, but she gave us Lottie instead.

FISHER. Well, mother-in-law or no mother-in-law, I'd send her flying so fast—

PERRY. So would I—but I can't just at pres-

ent. I'm going to build.

FISHER. What's that got to do with it?

PERRY. I want to borrow about \$20,000 from my father-in-law.

FISHER. Your father-in-law?

PERRY. When I say father-in-law I really mean mother-in-law, because she signs the checks.

FISHER. Speaking of mothers-in-law reminds me of the cause of my visit. (*Rises.*) Frank, I am on the best road of becoming your brother-in-law and I came to ask you——

PERRY (*looks at him*). Not to be too scarce with my invitations to dinners, suppers and theatre parties when the girls come to town?

FISHER. (*surprised*). Are they coming to town? (*Sits in chair.*)

PERRY. Didn't Annie write to you——?

FISHER. Annie! How do you know it is Annie?

PERRY. (*giving himself airs*). Oh, I am a mind reader.

FISHER. Then without any preliminaries—it is a case of love at first sight.

PERRY. That seems to be running in the Bloodgood family.

FISHER. We corresponded—about three weeks ago she stopped answering my letters. I got worried and went out to Rockford.

PERRY. Rockford?

FISHER. I called on the Bloodgoods—the ladies were out. I called again—same thing. I wrote—my letter was returned. Just as I left the house for the fifth time I ran into the manager of the local opera house. He recognized me. (*Smiles consciously; PERRY smiles with him.*) I had played there once with one of the

"Charley's Aunt" companies.

PERRY. You were a pretty bad actor, but you did play that part all right.

FISHER (*ironically bows*) Thanks!

PERRY. Not at all. (*Bows*) You were the best Aunt I ever saw.

FISHER. Well, that Aunt was the cause of my undoing.

PERRY. How's that?

FISHER. Annie had told her father and mother about me—the old man casually mentioned my name to the manager—he told them of my histrionic past—and the old folks declared they wanted no "play actors" in their family. "Curtain." (*Gesture of curtain coming down.*)

PERRY. But you are a stock-broker now.

FISHER. That's what I tried to tell them, but they would not see me and returned my letters un-opened. What shall I do? (*Rises, goes to c.*)

PERRY. (*rises, goes to R.*) The girls are coming to town soon. I'll see what I can do for you.

FISHER. (*R.C.*). Oh, thank you—you take a load from my heart! Frank, I really love Annie. She's a darling.

PERRY. By the way, who was the girl I saw you with at the Ritz the other night?

FISHER (*brightly*). Wasn't she sweet? She's a French girl.

PERRY (*sternly*). You'll have to stop taking French girls out to supper if you want to become my brother-in-law. (*With entire change of manner, quickly and eagerly.*) What did you say her name was?

FISHER. Fanchon Armitage—she's a cloak model at Madame Jolivet's, 51st street. I say, have you anything to drink in the house besides that coffee? I'm thirsty.

PERRY. You'll find something in there, old man. (*Points to door R.I.*)

(FISHER exits into room, leaves door open.)

PERRY (*takes pocket book from pocket, puts down address*). Fanchon Armitage, Madame. Jolivet's 51st street. (*Loudly.*) George, I want you to promise me that you won't see that girl again.

FISHER. (*Off R.I.*). I won't. On my word.

(LOTTIE enters R. 2.)

LOTTIE. A gentleman whose name is Travers to see you, sir.

PERRY. Show him in.

LOTTIE. What!!

PERRY. Please. (LOTTIE stands aside up R.)
(Enter TRAVERS R.2. He is a man of 55 or 60, clean-shaven, unmistakeable type of a palmy-day actor on the downward grade.
LOTTIE exits R.2.)

TRAVERS. Sir, allow me to assure you of my most distinguished consideration. (*Looks around.*) No wives or mothers-in-law about?

PERRY. No., (*Disgusted surprise.*) Why?

TRAVERS. Then everything's all right—you needn't worry.

PERRY. Worry? Why should I?

TRAVERS. If I were a married man I'd worry.

FISHER (*coming in with the whiskey bottle, breezily*) Hallo, Ham! What are you doing here?

TRAVERS (*with dignity*). Oh, how are you, George?

PERRY (*to FISHER*). Who's your friend?

FISHER (R.). Mr. Hamilton Travers, once a celebrated tragedian; now doorman at a caba-

ret. (*Crosses to front of table.*)

TRAVERS (L.C. sees bottle). Ah, George, this is most thoughtful of you. (*Takes whiskey bottle and glass from FISHER.*) Circumstances over which I have no control—Thank you, sir. (*Pours out a stiff drink and gulps it down.*) Very good—I need not go into details about the cause—

PERRY (*Crossing to R.C., takes bottle from him.*) You needn't sir.

TRAVERS. (C.). I was too spiritual—(*looking at bottle, etc., regretfully.*)

PERRY (*looks pointedly at bottle.*) Very likely. Kindly state your business.

TRAVERS. With pleasure. Er—may I first trouble you for another drop of that delicious aquaviva?

PERRY. Here, but hurry up, please. (*Pours drink out, TRAVERS holding glass.*)

(*TRAVERS drinks, puts glass on table.*)

PERRY (*looks suspiciously at bottle, smells it aside to FISHER.*) Good Heavens! You got hold of the bayrum bottle.

TRAVERS. Ah! This is better than most of the stuff one gets nowadays. There is some substance to this.

FISHER (*Smells bottle.*) Well, I'll be—(*Takes bottle.*)

(*Exits R.I.*)

PERRY. Now to your business, sir.

TRAVERS. You left (*produces card case, holds it up*) this in box C last night.

PERRY, My card case! How did you know it belonged to me?

TRAVERS. From the cards in it!

PERRY. If I remember rightly, there was some money in it, (*pause, then emphatically*).

TRAVERS. And on one of the cards—your card—was written an invitation to Miss Trixie

PERRY. I see. Well I'm very much obliged to you. Here—(*Offers him two dollars*).

TRAVERS. (*Drawing back haughtily*) Pardon me sir. But a gentleman never accepts remuneration for a service rendered another gentlemen. Good morning. (*To FISHER who has re-entered.*). Oh! George. Couldst let me have ten dollars until salary day?

FISHER. Certainly (*produces bills, looks them over*). My blessing!

TRAVERS. Thanks George. I'll bring it to your office.

FISHER. Keep it.

PERRY. He'll keep it.

TRAVERS. Oh! Charming young ladies you had with you Mr. Perry. The little blonde was inclined to flirt a bit.

PERRY. (*Angrily*). Say—

TRAVERS. Oh! Not the one next to you—who was Mrs. Perry, I presume. No—the one with the taffy colored hair—

PERRY. Get out—

TRAVERS. Kindly remember me to her. Gentlemen—good morning. (*Exits R.2.*)

PERRY. The idea of being in the hands of that old blackmailer makes me shiver. I wish my wife were home. I'm not made for a fast life. (*Sits sofa L.*)

FISHER. You seem to stand it pretty well.

PERRY. By the way, George—I must tell you—we got run in last night. (*Rises, goes to FISHER.*)

FISHER. How did that happen?

PERRY. Well, one of the fellows didn't know when he had enough and insisted on giving an open-air performance in the street.

FISHER. Did it draw?

PERRY. Have you ever seen a free show that didn't?

(FISHER sits table R.)

(*Go to desk. Bus. with letters.*) Unfortunate-
ly, a policeman was among the audience—he
enjoyed it as much as the rest. But when she'd
finished he said the Sergeant at the station was
longing for company—so he gathered us in.

FISHER (*laughs.*) By Jove, did you have to
stay at the station all night?

PERRY. No, I got bailed out. To morrow I'll
go down to the police court with my lawyer,
pay the fine—and, that's the end of it. (*Looks
at letter.*) Oh—from my wife—excuse me?

FISHER. I'll trot. (*Rises, starts to go.*)

PERRY. Wait a minute. (*Reading.*)

FISHER. Good news?

PERRY. Eva's coming home. (*Reads.*) "It's
getting very cold up here—besides, I can't stay
away from you another day—have you been a
good boy?"

(FISHER curiously examines his back.)

PERRY (*drily*) What are you looking for?

FISHER. I'm looking for the wings.

PERRY (*continuing*). "I had a letter from
mother; she asked whether you had carried out
your promise to become a Mason? I hope you
have done so during my absence." (*Speaks.*)
By Jove! here's a nice mess—I had forgotten
all about it.

FISHER (*goes R.*). That's no misfortune.

PERRY. You don't understand. My mother-in-law put that notion into her head. It was too stupid of me to forget—it may queer me with the old lady and then good-by to the 20,000. (*Both sit; FISHER R.C., PERRY on sofa L.*) My father-in-law is a great mason—thirty-sixth or thirty-seventh degree—in fact, I believe he is exalted ruler, grand master or something of that sort out there in Rockford.

FISHER. I see—it was to be a sort of surprise for the old gentleman?

PERRY. Yes. My mother-in-law contends that the Lodge is the only safe place for married men nowadays; so when Eva went up-State she insisted on my joining one.

FISHER. The old gentleman must have been a gay bird.

PERRY. No, but his wife thinks he was. While he was still in his teens he ran away with a milliner—Angeline something—I forget the other name, and married her; she was a holy terror. After a short time she disappeared, and he secured a divorce; shortly after he met his present wife, my mother-in-law, married her and settled in Rockford.

FISHER.. What became of the other woman?

PERRY. It is said she committed suicide.

FISHER. You don't say so!

PERRY. On the very day of his wedding to my mother-in-law, she wrote her last letter, saying she intended to kill herself—and the letter, through an unfortunate chain of circumstances fell into the hands of his bride.

FISHER. Great Scott!

PERRY. You can imagine the capital my mother-in-law has made out of it in the course

of years. The departed "Angeline" has grown to be the curse of his life.

FISHER. Angeline? Sounds like a foreigner?

PERRY. Some crazy French or Italian girl. Whenever he feels tempted to kick over the traces, she puts a damper on him by reminding him of "Angeline."

FISHER. By Jove—a fellow can never be too careful about such affairs. (*Goes R.*)

PERRY (*rises*). That ought to be a warning to you. Don't take any French girls to the Ritz for late suppers. (*Rises, goes L.*)

FISHER (*smiles*). I like your cheek (*goes to PERRY*) after your conduct last night.

PERRY. What am I going to do about this mason business? Are you a mason?

FISHER. No, but I'm a buffalo. If you have eleven cents I'll initiate you. Are you on?

PERRY. If Eva finds out I haven't complied with her wish—

FISHER (*R.C.*) Why don't you simply tell her that you have joined the Lodge? Meanwhile you get proposed, and before she has a chance to find you out you'll be a full-fledged mason.

PERRY (*C.*) That's not a bad scheme, George. But what am I to tell her if she asks me any questions about the Lodge? I don't know the first thing about masonry.

FISHER. Neither do I.

PERRY. You'll be a great help to me, George.

FISHER. Have you an encyclopaedia?

PERRY (*pointing to bookcase*). Yes, there's one over there. (*Points up C. crosses*.)

FISHER (*goes up to bookcase. Perry crosses R.*) A b c d—f—there we are. (*Takes out volume, turns leaves.*) Farragut—flying machines—France—there—freemasonry — that's

it. Quite a long article. (*Reads.*) "Freemasonry has for its object the enlightenment of humanity as well as the promotion of practical brotherhood all over the world."

PERRY. That's rather general.

FISHER. Wait—this is more to the point. (*Reads.*) "It possesses symbolical forms, customs, special countersigns, etc.—as to which the members are pledged to preserve the most inviolable secrecy." (*Speaks.*) "The most inviolable secrecy." That lets you out, old man; if your wife asks you any questions, you simply say, with a shrug of shoulders: "My dear child, don't ask questions—I can't answer them—we are pledged to the most inviolable secrecy."

PERRY (*delighted*). By Jingo—that's great.

FISHER (*reads*). "The brotherhood is organized in lodges, and there are three degrees; apprentices, fellowcrafts and mastermasons. At the head of each lodge there is a worshipful master."

PERRY. Uhm—like my father-in-law.

FISHER (*mumbling*). I suppose so. "It's origin dates back to the building of the Temple of Solomon."

PERRY. Oh, that'll do. I know all I need, and in case of emergency (*takes stage R.*) I have the oath of secrecy to fall back on.

FISHER (*puts the book open on the table; then over to PERRY*). There's another most important point: it provides you with a capital excuse in case you get home late—you'll have been to your lodge. (*Goes L..*)

PERRY. I say, you're an unscrupulous beggar—but it's a good idea.

FISHER. You'll have to display special activity as a new member; there'll be degrees to

take and special duties to perform.

PERRY. What kind of duties?

FISHER (*meaningly*) Oh, that's a secret.

PERRY (*does not see it first, then laughs*). Oh, ha, ha,—one can keep that up for ever.

FISHER (*pointing to his head*). Great head, eh?

PERRY (*with mock seriousness*). I'll have to warn poor Annie before she falls a victim to your wiles.

FISHER. Just to show me your gratitude for getting you out of your scrape. (*Crosses to exit, R.2. PERRY goes L.*) I'll be around to-morrow to see how you are getting on, "Brother" Perry.

(*Exit R. 2.*)

PERRY (*takes out letter, calls*.) I say, George—I forgot—George—— (*To door.*)

(*LOTTIE enters R.2.*)

LOTTIE. Mr. Fisher's gone, sir.

PERRY. Lottie, Mrs. Perry is coming home to-day. (*Reads.*) "I can't stay away another twenty-four hours." (*Speaks.*) Dated day before yesterday—she ought to be here in the course of the day. (*To LOTTIE.*) Lottie, have dinner ready, in case Mrs. Perry comes.

EVA (*off*). Frank!

(*EVA enters, R.2., in travelling costume*)

EVA. Frank!

PERRY. Eva!

(*They rush into each other's arms and embrace.*)

EVA. Oh, I'm so glad to get home!

PERRY. You can't be more glad than I am, my darling. (*Kisses her.*)

LOTTIE (*aside*). Listen to him, the cheat!

(LOTTIE *smiles sarcastically and takes satchels.*)

EVA. You bad boy. (*Crosses L.*) Why didn't you meet me at the station—didn't you get my letter?

PERRY. Yes, dear, but you forgot to mention the train you were coming on. (*Takes off EVA'S coat, puts it on sofa L.*)

EVA. If you loved me really devotedly, you would have guessed.

PERRY (*goes to her and takes both her hands in his*). The mountain air seems to have agreed with you—you are looking splendid.

EVA (*L.C.*). Oh, I'm all right—but I can't say the same of you. You poor boy, you look pale and worn out.

LOTTIE (*bursting out, coming down R.C.*). An it ain't no wonder, ma'am.

EVA. What do you mean, Lottie?

LOTTIE. Mane? I mane that whin a man niver gets home before the milkman comes—

EVA. What do I hear, Frank? What have you to say for yourself?

PERRY (*calmly*). Oh—nothing — nothing at all — what Lottie says is true.

EVA. Frank! You can't even say a word in your defence? (*Down L.C.*)

LOTTIE. He can't ma'am.

(*Picking up tray on table R.*)

PERRY. Why should I? What time was it when I got home last night?

LOTTIE (*ironically*). Last night? After four this mornin'.

PERRY. Arrah, tell the truth, Lottie. It was after five.

EVA (*perplexed*.). You seem proud of it. (Goes L.)

PERRY (*as calmly as before*). And yesterday, and the day before yesterday—in fact the entire week. Didn't I come home about the same time, Lottie?

LOTTIE. He did, ma'am. (Up R. C.)

EVA (*goes to PERRY*). How dare you tell me all this with a smile on your face?

PERRY. It was rather a grind, but I was willing to put up with it for love of you. (LOTTIE drops tray with bang, PERRY and EVA start.

EVA. For love of me? Why, Frank, what has come over you in the month I've been gone?

PERRY. Eva, you hurt me.

EVA. I hurt you?

PERRY. Is this my reward for having fulfilled your wishes? (Crosses R., laughing bitterly.) Ha, ha, ha, very good! Just like a woman! (Sits chair R.) Just like a woman!

EVA. (*bewildered*). My—wishes? (Crosses to PERRY.)

LOTTIE (*has been listening in amazement—anxiously to EVA*). Shall I run for a doctor, ma'am? (Crosses L.C. at door.)

EVA (*crosses to him*). I don't understand you, Frank.

PERRY (*rises*). And I don't understand you! Ever since we've been married you've been urging me to join the Lodge. Just before you

went away you made a special point of it. I thought you would be delighted when you came back to hear me say, "Eva, darling, I am a free-mason." And now—oh, I am disappointed! (*Throws himself into chair L. of table.*)

LOTTIE (*horrified*). A freemason, good heavens!

EVA. Is it really true? Oh, you, you dear, sweet, darling boy! (*Kneels.*) Can you forgive me?

PERRY. Don't worry, my darling, I forgive you.

LOTTIE. Why, ma'am, don't ye know that the devil himself is hand in glove with 'em?

EVA (*smiling*). Why, Lottie!

LOTTIE (*with conviction*). Indade, indade, he is that, ma'am. An' whin he comes to see them, it's down the chimney he comes!

EVA (*gaily*). Oh, come now, Lottie!

LOTTIE. I'll stay in this house no longer.

PERRY (*crosses to LOTTIE*). Lottie, don't be such a —— (EVA gets L.C.)

LOTTIE (*retreats, showing signs of terror*). Don't touch me!

(*Exit R.2, with tray.*)

PERRY (*quickly*). Give her a month's wages and let her go. (*Tickled at the idea.*)

EVA. Oh, she'll get over it all right.

PERRY. I'm glad you think so. No matter when I get home I always find her entertaining Mrs. MacCarthy the scrub woman. It is that Mick that puts all that nonsense into her head.

EVA (*taking off her hat and placing it on table R.*). She'll get over it.

(PERRY shows signs of disappointment.)

But tell me, dear, how did you get along?

PERRY. I missed you dreadfully.

EVA. No—no—I mean with your initiation? How did you get through? (*Both go L., sofa L. and sit.*)

PERRY. First rate. It was all very solemn and impressive.

EVA (*sitting next to him—nestling close to him, eagerly*). Now tell me, weren't you just a wee bit frightened. (*Sits R. of L. sofa.*)

PERRY. Frightened? (*Sits L. of L. sofa.*) Nonsense! Why should I be?

EVA. Well, I've been told they have a sort of chamber of horrors—full of skeletons and bones and skulls, with trap-doors and secret passages—a procession of masked men with sharp-pointed daggers—riding on black goats; but come, tell me all about it—I'm just dying to hear it all!

PERRY. I am sorry my dear child, but we are pledged to inviolable secrecy! I will acknowledge one thing, I got bow-legged riding goats.

EVA. Not really?

PERRY. I had to take a solemn oath!

EVA. How interesting—what did you have to swear?

PERRY. No end of things.

EVA. For instance?

PERRY. H'm, darling—er—that's a profound secret, you know.

EVA. Yes—of course—but you can tell your wife, I'm sure.

PERRY. My wife least of all! (*Solemnly*). I had to take a special oath to that effect.

EVA (*rises goes L. petulantly*). How very ungallant! But if that's the case I shall not

insist any further! (*Steps to mirror and adjusts her hair.*)

(PERRY heaves a sigh of relief.)

(LOTTIE enters with a telegram.)

LOTTIE. Here's a telegraph what's just come.

PERRY. Give it to me. (*Rises, goes to LOTTIE.*)

LOTTIE (*holds it out to him with the tips of her fingers.*). Here!

PERRY (*testily*). Oh, come, what's all this nonsense? (*Crosses to her.*)

LOTTIE (*with a violent start*). Lord, have mercy on us! (*Crosses round sofa, hands telegram to EVA.*)

(*Exit quickly, R.2.*)

PERRY. Old idiot!

(*Ready auto effect off R.*)

EVA (*has opened telegram and reads.*) Oh, Frank, mother and father are coming with Lulu and Annie.

PERRY. The deuce they are?

EVA. Aren't you glad?

PERRY (*with forced gaiety*). Glad! I'm delighted!

EVA. Just think how nice it will be to have father here as a brother mason.

PERRY (*as before*). Very nice!

EVA. Won't he be glad to hear it—and mother too!

PERRY. Mother! is mother coming?

EVA. Yes.

PERRY. Oh, then there'll be general rejoicing.

EVA. Oh, dear! I do wish they'd sent me word earlier. The servants won't be here until Monday. No curtains up—no carpets down.

PERRY. Telegraph them not to come.

EVA. It's too late now, they're on the way. There's no time to be lost if their rooms are to be ready for them. (*Calling off up R.*) Lottie! Lottie!

LOTTIE (*outside R.2.*). Yis, ma'am.

EVA. We must get the spare rooms ready—my people are coming! Quick! Quick! Good-bye, dear. I must go and see after them.

(*Exit hastily R.I.*)

PERRY (*looks after her, then looks around. Comes down C.*) If the Worshipful Master finds out I've been drawing on my imagination, my chances of drawing on him will be very slim!

(*Noise of auto stopping is heard.*)

(*Goes to window.*) Holy smoke! There they are already! I'll make myself scarce for the present. I don't feel quite prepared to face the old man.

(*Exits L.C. at back.*)

(*Enter BLOODGOOD, MRS. BLOODGOOD, ANNIE,*

LULU, ushered in by LOTTIE, R.2.)

LOTTIE. This way, please.

(LULU sits L. TABLE R. MR. BLOODGOOD, ANNIE, MRS. BLOODGOOD.)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. This is a nice reception. (*Is now c., looks around.*) Why, where's everybody? (*Sits sofa L.*)

LOTTIE. Mrs. Perry is busy getting your rooms ready—I'll tell her of your arrival.

BLOODGOOD. I telegraphed from Newburg—did you get my wire?

LOTTIE. Yes, sir.

(*Exit R.2.*)

LULU. Oh, I'm so tired.

ANNIE. Tired? How can anybody feel tired in New York? I'm too glad to be here to feel tired.

LULU (*rises, goes to BLOODGOOD*). It won't take me long to get rested. We'll be on the go all day to-morrow, won't we, papa? We'll take you all over and show you the park and Broadway, where the swells live, and the theatres—

ANNIE (*crosses to BLOODGOOD*.) Yes, we'll go to all the theatres—you know how I love the drama. (*They cling to BLOODGOOD*.)

BLOODGOOD. Yes, yes, children—you shall see all that's worth seeing, and we'll have a capital time.

LULU. You dear old dad. (*Kisses him*.)

ANNIE. You are the dearest father that ever lived! (*Kisses him on other side*.)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Go and look for Eva, girls. (*Seated on sofa L.*)

LULU and ANNIE. All right, mother.

(*They exeunt R. 2.*)

BLOODGOOD (*looking after them.*) Splendid girls, so full of life. (*Puts hat on rack.*) Oh, we're going to have a gay time.

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*frowning*). A gay time? Here in New York—the scene of the tragedy? Have you forgotten "Angeline"?

BLOODGOOD. Good Lord! (*Goes R.*) After twenty years, I think I might hear the last of the tragedy! You are really making my life a burden, Caroline.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. I am surprised, Amos! Even if I have forgiven you, your whole life ought to be devoted to repentance and atonement.

(BLOODGOOD sighs)

(*Goes on without heeding him.*) Instead, your thoughts run on revelry and amusement!

BLOODGOOD. Yes, we revel an awful lot in Rockford.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Don't you go to your Lodge every week?

(BLOODGOOD clears his throat)

It is true you meet nothing but staid and respectable men there. (*Sitting on sofa L.*)

BLOODGOOD. Oh, most respectable.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. And now you hold such an exalted office—

BLOODGOOD. What office?

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Why, haven't they elected you Master of your Lodge?

BLOODGOOD (*a second bewildered, then sees it.*) Oh!—sure. (*Turns away.*) Oh, my! (*Goes a little R.*)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. You have not missed a single meeting for twenty years.

BLOODGOOD. Yes, that's true.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. I was the proudest woman in the world when you came home that morning, after a long meeting (BLOODGOOD runs finger inside of collar as though choking) to tell me you had been made Master of your Lodge. I wish I could see you once presiding at one of your meetings.

BLOODGOOD. (*quickly—turns to her, goes C.*) That's impossible, Caroline, you know that!

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Why don't they admit women? I'm sure you could achieve greater results if you permitted us to assist you in your noble work.

BLOODGOOD. I dare say you are right—I have advocated it again and again—but they won't have it. A few jolly sisters—

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*rise*), Jolly sisters?

BLOODGOOD. Er—er—a masonic expression, my dear—we call all women sisters, you know.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. But jolly sisters?

BLOODGOOD. Well, there's no harm in being jolly, is there?

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Perhaps not—for some people—but a man who has a great iniquity weighing on his conscience, should never be *jolly!* "Remember Angeline." (*Crosses to C.*)

BLOODGOOD (*exasperated, crosses L.*) You don't give me much chance to forget her! (*Sits on sofa L.*)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Because I still hope that some day your conscience will wake up!

BLOODGOOD. Aren't you tired of dinning this into my ears? I've had twenty years of it; I

can't stand it much longer—it's worse than hard labor.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. It is my duty to watch over you and over Frank.

BLOODGOOD. Well, Frank is all right.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. That remains to be seen. Lottie will tell me. I did not send her here for nothing. He won't get one penny from me, unless I hear that his conduct has been above reproach. (*Goes C.*)

BLOODGOOD (*rises, goes to MRS. BLOODGOOD*). Come now, Caroline, I know he needs the money.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Of course you would stick up for him! Birds of a feather. I have my eye on him—my daughter shall not have to put up with what I had to go through. First of all, I must know whether he has complied with my wish.

BLOODGOOD. What wish?

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*crosses L.*) That's a surprise for you. (*Turns up a little.*)

BLOODGOOD (*crosses C. and up*). Don't give me any more surprises, Caroline, I don't like them. (*Goes R.C.*)

(EVA enters, comes running in from R.I.)

EVA (C.) Father! Mother! (*Embraces them.*) Oh, I'm so glad to see you!

MRS. BLOODGOOD (L.C.) My darling!

BLOODGOOD (R.C.). Well, my dear Eva, how are you?

EVA. Very happy father. Frank is very devoted to me.

BLOODGOOD. Do you hear that, Caroline?

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Love is blind. Has your

husband complied with my request?

EVA. He has, mother. Father—

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Don't tell him, my dear.

EVA. Yes, I will. Only fancy, father, you'll never guess.

BLOODGOOD. No.

EVA. *Frank is a freemason.*

BLOODGOOD (*horrified*). What? (*Staggers R.C., then laughs. Crosses R. and then back.*)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. That's my surprise; didn't I manage it splendidly? (*Laughs.*)

BLOODGOOD (*still laughing*). You don't know how delighted I am.

EVA. You and Frank will be closer friends than ever now. But come, luncheon is on the table.

(EVA and MRS. BLOODGOOD start to go to Exit R.C.)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. All right, my darling. Come, Amos.

BLOODGOOD. You two go ahead. I'll brush up a little—I'll follow you in a second.

EVA. Don't be too long, father. Come, mother. I have lots to tell you.

BLOODGOOD (*up C. madly*). Holy suffering mackerel. (*Throws up his hands in despair.*) If my wife finds out that the Lodge has been a dodge to get out for a game of bridge I might as well commit suicide. Frank a mason, and I haven't the faintest idea of masonry. He must have an encyclopaedia—I gave him one last Christmas. (*Rushes to bookcase—finds volume gone.*) Confound it. The game's up—the volume's gone. (*Sees it on table.*) Oh, there it is, and open at the very page—that shows how serious he takes it. Let's see if I can't gather a bit of information. (*Reads.*) "Has

for it's object the enlightenment of humanity." (Speaks.) Every fool knows that. (Reads.) "Symbolical forms—secret signs by which they recognize each other." (Speaks.) That's something. (Down L.C.)

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*outside*). Come in here, Lottie.

(BLOODGOOD quickly shuts book, holding it behind back and moves toward the bookcase when MRS. BLOODGOOD enters, followed by LOTTIE from R.C.)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. What are you doing here, Amos?

BLOODGOOD. Nothing, my darling—nothing. (Backs jocularly up towards bookcase, sings loudly as he slips book in its place.)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Why don't you go and have your lunch?

BLOODGOOD. Going-going, darling. (To door facing her, his hands behind his back; edges towards door R.C.)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Why are you hiding your hands?

BLOODGOOD (*standing right in doorway of dining-room*). You are always so suspicious, darling. (Shows hands, exits R. C.)

LOTTIE (*as if continuing*). Sure, ma'am, it's the truth—an' more, Mrs. Bloodgood, it's not for the like of me to stay in a house where the master is wan of those freemasons.

MRS. B. What's wrong about that, Lottie? (Sits on sofa L.)

LOTTIE. Sure ma'am—'tis with the devil himself they have their dalings. Are you a mason, ma'am?

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Don't be childish, Lottie.

LOTTIE. Mrs. McCarthy, the scrub lady, does

be tellin' me of a friend o' hers what reads in a book where there was a woman among them; Oi have 'coo much respect for ye, ma'am, to tell you what things that woman saw.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. That's a mistake (*crosses R.*)—my husband tells me that women are not admitted.

LOTTIE. That shows, ma'am, what liars they all be. The devil's got them in his clutches.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. That'll do, Lottie, we'll talk about it some other time. Now go to your work.

LOTTIE. Yes, ma'am.

(*Exit LOTTIE R. C.*)

(EVA, LULU, ANNIE and BLOODGOOD enter from dining-room.)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Where is your husband, Eva?

EVA. I think he went to his office—I'll telephone down

(LULU and ANNIE go to sofa R.)

BLOODGOOD. Don't disturb him—business before pleasure.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. You don't seem anxious to see your new brother?

BLOODGOOD. Anxious is hardly the word, my dear—I er—er— (*Up R., sits sofa.*)

(LOTTIE enters.)

LOTTIE. Mr. Halton to see Mr. Perry.

EVA (*to door*). How are you, Mr. Halton? So glad to see you.

(Enter HALTON. BLOODGOOD heaves a sigh of relief at the announcement. HALTON is a good-natured, jovial, stout man, rather loquacious, wears store clothes.)

HALTON. Lookin' fine, Mrs. Perry—how's Mr. Perry? Well, you deserted us last summer.

EVA. I thought a change would do us no harm. (*Introducing.*) My mother, Mrs. Bloodgood—my father, my sisters, Annie and Lulu—Mr. Halton, the gentleman on whose farm we spent our summer last year. Won't you sit down?

("How-do-you-do" all round. BLOODGOOD sits sofa L.)

EVA. What brings you to New York, Mr. Halton? (*Sits head of table.*)

HALTON. I've sold my place and we intend settling in New York. (*Sits L. of table.*)

EVA. What does Mrs. Halton say to that?

HALTON. I did it to please my wife—we have no children and it was rather lonesome for her in the winter. She'll be here to-morrow, and if you don't mind I'll bring her up for a little chat.

EVA. We shall be delighted to see her.

HALTON. We are going to enjoy life now, and I came to ask Mr. Perry—he's a man about town—if he wouldn't be so kind as to put me up at one of his clubs.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Club—you ought to join the freemasons, Mr. Halton. (*Pause for Bus. of embarrassment for BLOODGOOD.*) My husband is Worshipful Master of his Lodge—I'm

sure he'll be delighted to propose you. Won't you, Amos?

(Slaps table.) Won't you, Amos?

BLOODGOOD (starting.) Cer — certainly — with pleasure.

HALTON. That's capital—I've always had the notion of joining—now that is very good of you, sir.

BLOODGOOD. Of course—er—I don't know if it would do for me to propose you—I'm hardly in touch with masonic affairs in New York.

EVA. Well, then, Frank will put you up, Mr. Halton.

BLOODGOOD (quickly). Yes, I think that would be better. Frank's the very man. Yes—you see, being a member of a—er—New York Lodge—he could put you up at a—er—New York Lodge.

HALTON It's all the same to me.

(PERRY enters L.C.)

ALL. There's Frank. (BLOODGOOD goes to window.)—where have you been so long?

(EVA rises. PERRY is most anxious to avoid BLOODGOOD'S eyes—HALTON crosses L. BLOODGOOD turns away the moment he catches sight of PERRY and examines a picture—his back is turned to PERRY.)

PERRY. Pardon me being absent at your arrival—some important business. (Catches BLOODGOOD'S eyes—he avoids him.) Hello, girls, awfully glad to see you. (Stands with his back to BLOODGOOD and looks over his shoulder to see what he is doing.) My dear mother, you are looking splendid—so fresh—so young, really. (BUS. as before with BLOODGOOD.)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Why so very amiable, Frank?

PERRY (*protestingly*). How can I help myself—there isn't another woman like you in the world. (*Long look at BLOODGOOD over shoulder.*)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. What are you looking for, Frank?

PERRY (*pretending to brush some dust off his shoulder.*) Oh, nothing, a little dust on my coat. (*Goes along the line, always keeping his back to BLOODGOOD.*) Hallo, Mr. Halton, I haven't seen you for ever so long. (*Shake hands with HALTON, R. of him, then gets up c.*)

HALTON. You'll see enough of me in the future. I'm going to settle in New York.

PERRY. Is that so?

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Frank, dear, won't you say "how-do-you-do" to your father-in-law?

EVA (*coming forward from up R.*) Father, let me introduce a new brother. (*To the others at table.*) Now watch them.

(EVA and HALTON cross to L. GIRLS and MRS. BLOODGOOD R.)

PERRY (*comes down c.*) Now for the bluff. (*With bated breath, wipes the perspiration from his brow.*)

BLOODGOOD (*aside*). I must watch what he does. (*Copies business of wiping brow.*) (*From now on they watch each other like cats, and the slightest gesture is closely imitated by the other.*)

(Solemnly.) My dear brother. (*Shoots his cuff.*)

PERRY. Master. (*Same business.* BLOODGOOD starts back frightened.)

BLOODGOOD. I salute thee. (*Shoots L. hand into the air, then wagging forefinger, describes half-circle until L. hand is behind back—simultaneously PERRY imitates him.*)

PERRY. (*Same Bus.*) I salute thee. (*Bus. fingers.*)

(*The girls EVA, ANNIE and LULU standing together R.C. follow motion of hands by bending down to watch.*)

BLOODGOOD (*opens his arms—the up-stage one higher than the other.*) My dear brother—

(*PERRY realizes he has the wrong arm up. changes quickly. BLOODGOOD thinks he is wrong and quickly copies PERRY. Their arms go like windmills for a few seconds.*)

BLOODGOOD. Into my arms. (*They embrace c. Music forte.*)

CURTAIN.

ACT II

SCENE.—*Same as Act I.*

TIME.—2 P.M.

(When curtain rises, discovered MRS. BLOODGOOD, EVA, PERRY reading newspaper, BLOODGOOD reading newspaper, ANNIE and LULU. The men are smoking cigars.)

EVA (*seated R. of table R.*). I am glad you like New York so much, mother.

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*seated L. of table R.*). I like it better than I expected. Of course it is so different from Rockford—still, if your father should be able to sell out his interests there, I'd be quite willing to come to New York and settle here.

PERRY (*seated extreme R., quickly*). New York is very unhealthy—we are always having epidemics of some kind here—I wouldn't advise any one to—

EVA. Nonsense, Frank why do you frighten mother?

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Don't worry, my child, I'm not so easily frightened.

(MRS. BLOODGOOD, EVA and LULU begin to sew
—ANNIE gets a book and reads.)

BLOODGOOD. It wouldn't be a bad idea, but when I think of settling down in a big strange city, where we know nobody but Frank—

MRS. BLOODGOOD. What are you talking

about, Amos? You'd get to know people soon enough, with your masonic connections.

(BLOODGOOD coughs to cover his embarrassment, LULU says "Oh, father," crosses to sofa L. pats BLOODGOOD on back, and then return to chair.)

BLOODGOOD. Thank you, my child.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. And Frank being a member of a New York Lodge would take you round.

EVA. He would be glad to do that, wouldn't you, Frank?

PERRY (with a start, coughs. EVA pats him on back.) Oh, cer-cer-certainly!

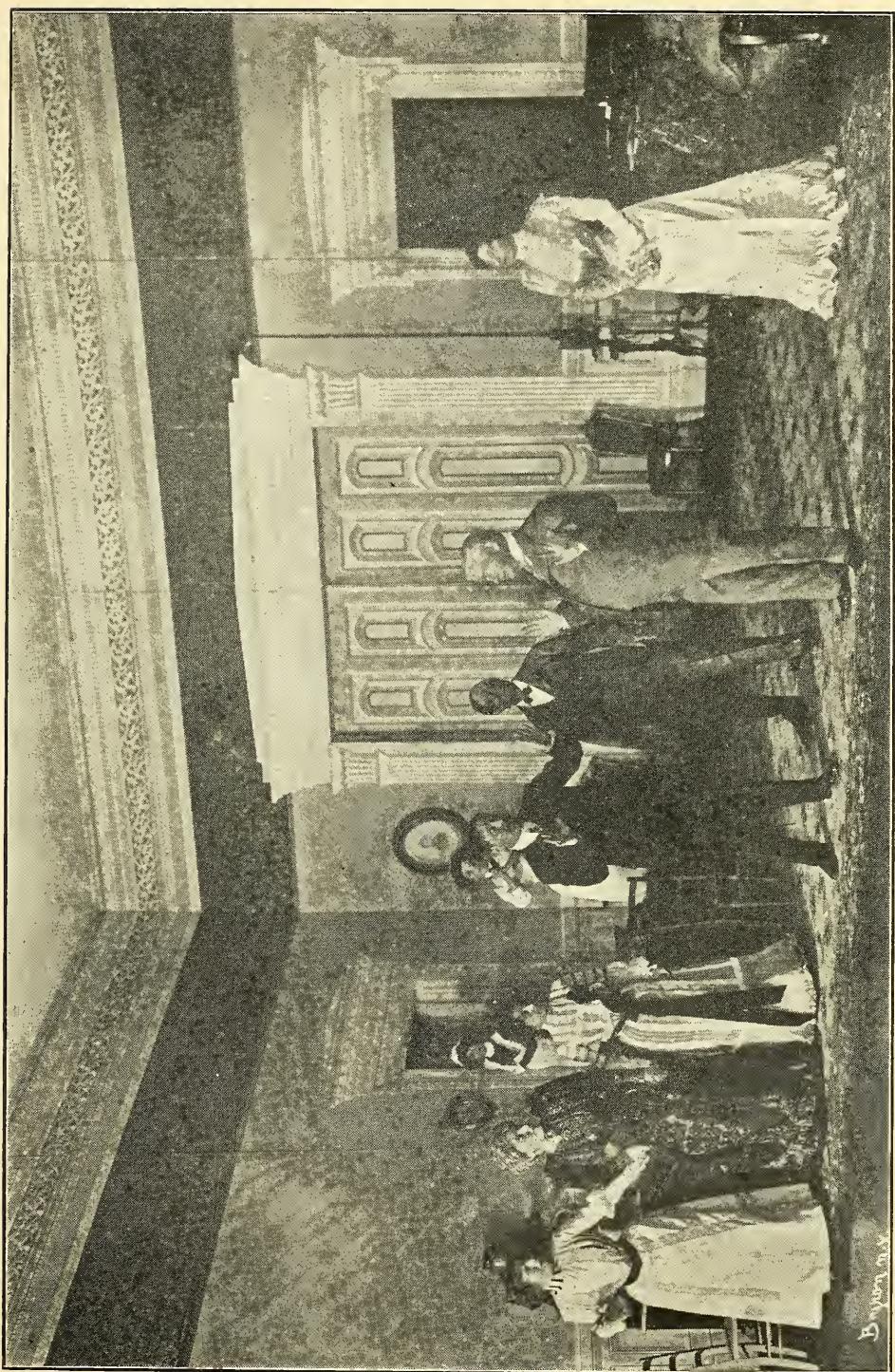
MRS. BLOODGOOD. What awful coughs you men have got.

PERRY. It's one of the epidemics I spoke of.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. As far as I have been able to gather, all the lodges are connected to a certain extent. Aren't they, Frank?

PERRY (greatly embarrassed). Er—er—yes—with each other, er—one lodge is connected with the other — er — that is to say — it — er — sometimes happens that — er — that the other one is connected with the first one — if — er — for instance — er — er — Now here's a Lodge (points to stage with R. hand) and here's another Lodge (points to stage with L. hand). Now these two Lodges coming together—(looks up with apologetic laugh). Oh, but really— (Is at the end of his tether, turns to BLOODGOOD.)—I really should not venture to speak about such matters in the presence of our Worshipful Master. I am quite a new member of the brotherhood—

See Page 38



"ARE YOU A MASON?"

I am sure father-in-law can explain the matter more lucidly than I could.

(BLOODGOOD starts, drops his cigar—bends for it and remains down to cover his embarrassment.)

LULU (*rises*). What is the meaning of the word "lodge"—what is its derivation?

PERRY. It's deri — deriv — er — er —
(Points to BLOODGOOD.) Father—explain to Lulu.

BLOODGOOD. Er—it is very hard to explain it in a few words—er—the meaning of a lodge—er—er rather by the word lodge, is meant—er—er—a conception of the idea—er—in connection with it—er—with it all. Yes, that's it. Yes, that's it. (*Leans back*.)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Will you please say that again, Amos. I didn't quite understand it.

BLOODGOOD. Didn't you? Er—I can't make it any plainer, my dear—you understood me, Frank, didn't you? (*Scratches his head very pointedly to convey idea it is a masonic sign*.)

PERRY (*scratches his head*.) Of course—I don't see how anybody could misunderstand, you put it so plainly, so comprehensively.

BLOODGOOD. Thank you, Frank. (*Rises—salutes*.)

PERRY. Not at all. (*Rises—salutes*.)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Now tell me, either of you—

(Enter LOTTIE R. 2)

LOTTIE (*announces*). Mr. Halton.

(Enter HALTON R. 2, LOTTIE exits R. 2)

(PERRY and BLOODGOOD both heave a deep sigh of relief.)

(PERRY goes round R. sofa to meet HALTON.
BLOODGOOD meets him from R.)

HALTON. Good afternoon everybody.

PERRY (on one side shakes his hand effusively). So glad you came. (Goes round sofa, sits chair R.)

BLOODGOOD (on the other side.) My dear sir, how are you, how are you? (Shakes his other hand.)

HALTON. Ouch! (Frees himself.) Gentlemen you are very kind. How are the ladies? See any of the sights of New York? (As he crosses, he shakes hands with them.) Nice little village, isn't it? Always something going on. (BLOODGOOD starts to sneak off at door L. C.)

LULU. There is so much one never knows where to turn first.

ANNIE. And all the people in the streets—I am so afraid of the traffic.

(BLOODGOOD trying to sneak off. MRS. BLOODGOOD motions HALTON to sit down. PERRY is C.R.)

HALTON (as he turns, sees BLOODGOOD). Well, Mr. Bloodgood, (BLOODGOOD stops—turns) how are you getting on?

BLOODGOOD. Oh, first rate, thank you. (Comes back—remains behind sofa.)

HALTON. I mean about my admission to the Lodge?

(PERRY tries to sneak off R. I.)

HALTON (*sits on sofa*). Mr. Perry, (PERRY returns) you are going to second me, aren't you? (Goes L.)

PERRY. Oh, yes, second you—second you with pleasure.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. You ought to have easy sailing with my husband as your sponsor. (Sits sofa L.)

EVA. Not to forget Frank.

PERRY (*behind EVA'S chair*): Er—well you see, my dear—it is not quite as easy as you seem to think. When a fellow comes along and applies for admission, he has to go through a number of probationary ordeals.

BLOODGOOD (*who has listened attentively—aside*). I'll have to remember that.

PERRY. Isn't that so, father.

BLOODGOOD. Oh, yes, everything depends on the probation. Not every man can stand it. Am I not right, Frank?

PERRY. Quite right, father—many a chap fails to qualify.

HALTON (*sitting L*). Is it as hard as all that?

PERRY. A great deal more.

BLOODGOOD (*emphatically*). Worse!

EVA (*pat him lovingly*). I can testify to that. Poor Frank looked a wreck after he got through.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Well, Mr. Halton seems to have a strong constitution. What Frank and your father can do, won't prove too much for him.

HALTON. Quite right—I can stand a few knocks—so hurry up, gentlemen, and put me up. Let's go to work while the iron is hot!

(BLOODGOOD rises, up stage. BLOODGOOD and PERRY up stage throw up their hands in despair.)

LOTTIE (*announces*). Mr. Travers!

(Enter TRAVERS R. 2, LOTTIE exits R. 2)

TRAVERS. Pardon me for dropping in so unceremoniously. (To PERRY.) I've brought the — (PERRY puts hand over mouth.) Ladies, (bows) Mr. Perry, we are going to have a big charity benefit to-morrow night, and knowing you as a patron of the house—the boss has taken the liberty of reserving box C for you.

(PERRY is stunned at the sight of TRAVERS.)

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*suspiciously*). A patron of the house? Box C? What does that mean, Frank?

PERRY (*greatly embarrassed*, TRAVERS and PERRY come down, PERRY R.C., TRAVERS L.C.). Oh—er—that is very simple—(Aside to TRAVERS.) Say "yes" to everything I say and I'll give you five.

TRAVERS. Right, laddie. (*Holds out his hand behind his back.*)

EVA. Won't you introduce the gentleman, Frank?

PERRY. Er—ahem—this is Mr. Travers Ham—I mean Hamilton Travers, one of the shining lights of our stage.

TRAVERS. Ladies. (*Bows.*)

LULU. How interesting!

ANNIE (*to LULU*). I wonder if he knows George?

PERRY. He's a member of our Lodge.

TRAVERS. Yes. (*Makes sign. Men imitate him.*)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. What was that about box C?

PERRY. Why, that's plain enough.

TRAVERS. As plain as the sunlight of Heaven. (*PERRY prods him with elbow.*) Oh—

PERRY. You see, it's like this. On—er—special occasions, the members assemble in the grand hall of the Lodge—which has a tier of boxes—just the same as at the opera. Now these are the tickets for the members who are to sit in box C.

TRAVERS. Yes, the boxes are marked with the letters of the alphabet.

PERRY (*aside to TRAVERS*). Shut up, (*Bus. as before*) you are simply to say "yes."

TRAVERS (*leaning over his shoulder, loudly*). Yes!

(BLOODGOOD *talking to HALTON.*)

PERRY. This is a special celebration and—er—the usual custom of our Lodge. Isn't it, father?

BLOODGOOD (*embarrassed—rises*). Yes, certainly, every member has a seat—in—er—in which—in which he (*pauses, points to seat*) sits. (*Smokes.*)

EVA. I suppose the members have lots of fun in the boxes.

TRAVERS. I could tell you a thing or two about—

PERRY (*breaks in*). Have a cigar, Travers! (*Offers cigar, TRAVERS takes it.*)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. I suppose my son-in-law was a frequent attendant during the last few weeks?

TRAVERS. Oh, nearly every evening.

PERRY. Why don't you light your cigar? (*Strikes match for him.*)

EVA (*fondly*). Poor Frank, every evening.

TRAVERS. We've had a very attractive bill of late.

PERRY (*enraged—pokes him in the ribs*). Smoke. (*Aside.*) Damn you, smoke up or there'll be a tragedy!

(TRAVERS *puffs out big volumes of smoke.*)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. I suppose you are a free-mason of long standing?

(BLOODGOOD at word "freemason" *sneaks into L. C.*)

TRAVERS (*takes cigar out of his mouth*). Free—?

PERRY. Mason! (*Aside to TRAVERS; prods him as before.*) Yes, of very long standing. You must excuse Mr. Travers now, I know he is always hard pressed for time. Go on Travers, don't let us detain you.

TRAVERS. I have nothing to do. It is a real pleasure to me to find myself in such congenial company.

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*graciously*). As a rule I am not very partial to members of your profession—but you seem so different— (*With side glance at ANNIE.*)

(ANNIE *sighs.*)

TRAVERS. There are *actors* and *actors!*

PERRY (L.C. *aside* to TRAVERS). If you don't do the vanishing act, I'll kick you downstairs.
(Goes up R.C.)

TRAVERS (*aside*). I'll get even with you for this.

PERRY. Mr. Travers just remembers a rehearsal he has to attend. (Pokes him in the ribs—takes him up stage.)

TRAVERS. I must tear myself away. Ladies, allow me to lay most respectful homage at your feet. (Bows, declaims—comes down C.)

Oh woman, in our hours of ease
Uncertain, coy and hard to please,
When pain and anguish wrings the brow,
A ministering angel thou!

(PERRY impatiently crosses up L.)

EVA. He has so much feeling.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Splendid—bravo } together.
LULU. Such a lovely voice.

HALTON. He reminds me of Booth.

TRAVERS. My dear sir, Booth played with me.

MRS. BLOODGOOD Let's hear some more, Mr. Travers.

TRAVERS. With pleasure. "The boy stood—

PERRY (comes down; *aside* to TRAVERS). If you don't go now, you don't get the five.

TRAVERS. Some other time, ladies—I must be going. (Goes up, gets hat at R. 2.)

ANNIE. Won't you come back after your rehearsal?

EVA. Yes, do, Mr. Travers—you can tell us something about your meetings.

TRAVERS (*gloating*). With pleasure, ladies—

(*Elaborate bow.*) Au revoir, see you later, Brother Perry. (PERRY looks after him.) (At R. 2 pantomimes "You owe me five" by hitting his chest with both fists then holding his hand up with fingers outspread. Exits R. 2.)

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*to the others*). Did you see that? A masonic sign.

LULU. I wonder if he wrote that poem himself?

EVA. I suppose so. Oh, they have very intelligent men for their members at the Lodge.

HALTON. I am more anxious than ever to join. (*Rises.*) Now tell me, Mr. Perry—
(*Catch PERRY who is about to exit.*)

PERRY (*quickly*). I'm sorry, but you'll have to excuse me, I must go to my office. (*Re-enter BLOODGOOD from up L. C.*)

EVA. This is Saturday—don't you close at twelve?

PERRY. Of course, but I must see if everything is locked up. (*PERRY sees him.*) My father-in-law will give you all the information you desire, Mr. Halton. Good afternoon. Good afternoon.

(*Exit R. 2.*)

(BLOODGOOD *is following PERRY.*)

(HALTON *goes up, catches BLOODGOOD by coat tails.*)

BLOODGOOD (*aside*). Confound it. (*With forced amiability.*) Well, what do you want?

HALTON. As far as the probationary ordeals are concerned, I'm not afraid of them.

BLOODGOOD. You are not? (*Solemnly.*) My

dear sir, if you wish to join the worthy fellowship of our order, you must obey the commands of your superior without a question.

HALTON. You'll find me ready, Master.

BLOODGOOD. Good. Then go this instant to Brooklyn Bridge, run across it three times—yes, run—(*HALTON looks dismayed*)—you must run all the way and come back here.

HALTON. What! Run from here across Brooklyn Bridge three times, on a day like this? It's a scorcher.

BLOODGOOD. If you are afraid of such a trifle how do you expect to stand the other tests?

HALTON. Must I run all the way?

BLOODGOOD. Yes, run all the way—via Tenth Avenue, and count every step.

HALTON. Count every step? (*Down in the mouth.*) All right, I'm ready. Obedience is the first duty of a freemason, ladies—Master. (*Slaps his chest, throws out R. hand towards BLOODGOOD, who looks startled—starts off on a trot counting.*) One—two—three, etc.

(*Exit R.2.*)

(BLOODGOOD rubs his hands and chuckles to himself.)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. You needn't have been so hard on the poor fellow.

BLOODGOOD (*with dignity*). My dear Caroline—you must allow me to be the judge of that. I am a mason—you are not.

(*Exits L. C.*)

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*rise*). Come with me, one

of you girls, and help me unpack my trunk.

EVA (*rises and goes up R.*). I'll help you, mother. (*Goes with MRS. BLOODGOOD off R. 2.*) (LULU and ANNIE rise the moment they exit.

'ANNIE *goes up, looks off, then comes eagerly down C.*)

ANNIE. I've got something to tell you, Lou.

LULU. I've got something to tell } you, Annie. } together.

(*Both laugh.*)

ANNIE. Who tells first?

LULU. You.

ANNIE. I saw George in the street yesterday—he bowed. I saw mother wasn't looking and I returned his bow.

LULU. Is that all?

ANNIE. That's all.

LULU. I've better news than that. I had a letter from Ernest; he's going to call on dad this afternoon and if he says "yes" we are going to get married in six weeks.

ANNIE. I wonder what's to become of poor George and me?

LULU. Wait until I get married. Ernest and I will fix it all right. You'll stay with us, and George can come to see you every day. How's that?

ANNIE. Oh, sis, you're a darling.

(LOTTIE *enters R.2.*)

LOTTIE. Mr. Morrison wishes to see Mr. Bloodgood, Miss.

LULU (*quickly—rise*). Show him in here,

Lottie. I'll tell father.

(LULU and ANNIE cross L. to look in glass.)

LOTTIE. This way, please.

(Lets MORRISON enter and exits R. 2.)

(MORRISON waits for LOTTIE'S exit, then rushes over to LULU and covers her with kisses.)

LULU (L.C.). Ernest—Ernest—— (Frees herself.)

MORRISON (C., sees ANNIE L.). I beg your pardon, Miss Bloodgood.

ANNIE (down L.C.). Don't mind me, I'm in the secret.

MORRISON. Are you? (Tries to grab LULU again.)

ANNIE. Stop! Do have some consideration for me.

LULU. She's right—poor Sis, it isn't quite fair.

MORRISON (to ANNIE). One more kiss, Lulu. Turn round, Sis.

ANNIE (makes a face and turns.) All right, but hurry up and get it over.

(LULU and MORRISON embrace and kiss: they remain in each other's arms until MRS. BLOODGOOD appears in the door R.2 and screams.)

ANNIE. Oh!

LULU. Mother!

{together.

MRS. BLOODGOOD (to LULU). What is the meaning of this? (To MORRISON.) How dare you, sir? (Crosses L.C.)

MORRISON (R.C., quite embarrassed). My

dear Mrs. Bloodgood—

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Have the goodness to explain.

LULU. We met during our last visit to town. He's Ernest.

MRS. BLOODGOOD (C.). So am I (*going to Lulu*)—dead earnest! I am shocked—positively shocked; *you* ought to be ashamed of yourself.

ANNIE. Mother dear—

MRS. BLOODGOOD. You ought to be ashamed for looking on!

MORRISON. My dear madame—

MRS. BLOODGOOD. And you ought to be ashamed. Leave the house this very instant. (To MORRISON. *Points to door.*)

MORRISON. If you insist, of course I must go; but before leaving, permit me to tell you the purpose of my visit.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. I won't listen to another word. (Goes R., MORRISON follows.)

MORRISON. I came to ask for Lulu's hand.

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*surprised*). Lulu's hand? (*Very quickly and graciously.*) My dear sir (*pushes him into chair*) won't you be seated—I'm so glad to meet you. (Shakes hand furiously.)

MORRISON (*sits R. of table.*) Then I may hope?

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Of course you may, Mr.—

MORRISON. Morrison, madame.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Mr. Morrison. (Sits on chair R.) Naturally, there are certain formalities to be observed—we don't know anything about you. I'm sure you won't object to Mr. Bloodgood's making some inquiries about you—(*up to MORRISON*)—your antecedents.

ANNIE (*makes a face and nudges LULU*). That's what queered George.

LULU. (*Crossing to MRS. BLOODGOOD*.) I don't see the necessity of that mother. (ANNIE *to C.*) I love him, and I know he'll make a good husband.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Hush, child, you don't know anything at all about it. Run away and sit down; you don't know how necessary this is—you agree with me, don't you, Mr.—er—Morrison?

MORRISON. You are quite right. I shall be glad to refer you to a number of people with whom I have had business connections for years; I can also refer you to many brethren of the *masonic lodge to which I belong*.

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*agreeably surprised*). Then you are a mason?

GIRLS. Isn't that nice?

MRS. BLOODGOOD. That is very nice indeed—my husband is a mason too.

MORRISON. Indeed?

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*proudly*). Yes, he is Worshipful Master of his Lodge.

MORRISON. Oh, really?

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*Glares at him and proceeds*.) And my son-in-law, Mr. Perry, is also a mason; you must have met him at your Lodge—(MORRISON *shows surprise*)—to be sure he has been admitted only recently.

MORRISON. I have not been able to attend the meetings very regularly of late, that may account for my not knowing him as a member, but I am delighted to hear it. He's a very dear friend of mine! I dare say you will attend the ladies' reception after lodge to-morrow evening?

LULU. Of course we will. (*Rises.*)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Do you admit ladies to your meetings?

MORRISON. Not to the regular meetings, but we have a ladies' day every year.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Strange! My husband never told me. (*LULU sits again.*)

MORRISON. It may be different in Rockford. I am sure you will spend a pleasant evening. There will be speeches—

ANNIE (*rises eagerly*). I don't care much for that—are you going to dance?

MORRISON. That too—we will have music, recitations—

MRS. BLOODGOOD. That will be Annie's chance—she's a very pretty reciter.

MORRISON (*gallantly*). We welcome talent from every quarter. (*Rise.*)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. I'm afraid we can't go, girls. (*Rises.*) We have no dresses! (*R.C.*)

ANNIE. We'll settle that all right, ma. (*Girls go to mother: ANNIE R. of her, LULU L. of her. They get in front of MORRISON.*) You can wear your light grey with the heliotrope sleeves,

MRS. BLOODGOOD. It's too tight, I can't hook it.

LULU. Then wear your green silk princess with the duchess lace.

ANNIE. Why can't you wear the gown dress with the butterflies—that's all the style.

(*These two speeches together to MRS. BLOODGOOD.*)

MORRISON (*has risen during the conversation*

he bows and is trying to say good-bye).
Ladies—

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*without noticing*). What are you going to wear?

ANNIE. I shall wear my pink, with my hair done high.

LULU. I think my white peau de soie with the blue pipings is very becoming. I can, if necessary, liven it up with a few flowers. (*All this is ad lib. until MRS. BLOODGOOD says "stop."* MORRISON goes to the other side of stage.)

(MORRISON then goes C.)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Stop! Girls, we haven't a moment to lose. Where is Mr. Morrison? Ah, there you are! (*Sees him, crosses to him.*) You must really excuse us, my dear Mr. Morrison, but you know when ladies get talking dresses—

ANNIE. He'd better get used to that.

LULU. Oh, Ernest does not mind that, do you?

MORRISON. Certainly not. But you are engaged on important business—I won't detain you now.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Come back later in the afternoon—meanwhile, I'll speak to my husband.

LULU (*embracing MRS. BLOODGOOD*). Oh, you darling. (*Crosses, kiss one another.*)

MORRISON. Then with your permission, I'll come back—ladies—

(*Motions LULU to door. He and LULU kiss on the quiet, then MORRISON exits R. 2.*)

ANNIE (*crosses to MRS. BLOODGOOD and walks across to LULU with her, to cover up the kissing.*) We must look our best, mother—these New Yorkers shall see that although we are from the country we have some notion of style.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. We'll ask Eva—she'll tell us where we can get what we need. I can't wear any of my old dresses. (*Going to door, calls.*) Eva! Eva! Come here a moment.

EVA (*off R.I., calls back.*) All right, mother.
(Enter EVA R.I.)

Well, what is it?

LULU. Just think, there is a grand ladies' reception at the Lodge to-morrow evening.

MRS. BLOODGOOD (c.). I consider it very remarkable that Frank never as much as hinted it—did you know anything about it?

EVA (R.) Not a word—but perhaps he wanted to surprise us.

ANNIE }
and } Yes, that's it. He wanted to surprise
LULU. } us.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Surprises are all very well when they don't involve dresses. How in the world are we to get anything to wear?

EVA (*gaily*). Why, mother, you forget you are in New York and not in Rockford. You can buy a whole trousseau in less than an hour.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. We must make a sort of a showing if we go, we owe that to your father, as a Worshipful Master. I leave it all to you, Eva, to see that the girls are dressed nicely. (*Go L.*)

ANNIE. You are a trump, mother. {*Girls go*
LULU. You're an angel, ma. {*to Mother.*

(*These two speeches together.*)

(*Girls embrace MRS. BLOODGOOD. Enter PERRY R. 2.*)

EVA (*up R.C., shakes her finger at him roguishly.*) You bad boy! Why didn't you tell us?

PERRY (C.). Tell you what?

ANNIE (L.C.) Look at his guilty face!
(EVA goes down R.C.)

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*sternly*). I don't know what to think of you, Frank! (*Crosses to FRANK.*) Why this playing hide-and-seek with us? Why didn't you tell us?

ANNIE. Mr. Morrison, who is a mason, was here and told us.

PERRY (*crestfallen*). Did he?

MRS. BLOODGOOD. You might have shown a little more consideration.

PERRY (C., *crushed, ready to confess*). My dear Eva—mother. I—confess—I am not a—

MRS. BLOODGOOD (L.C., *breaks in*). Don't try to excuse yourself—it's all very well for you men; you get your dress suits out, put them on and that ends it.

PERRY (*perplexed*). Dress suit? What do you mean?

MRS. BLOODGOOD. What I say—I don't know how we are going to manage. (*Goes R.*)

EVA (*crosses to MRS. BLOODGOOD*). Oh, don't worry, mother. (*Up stage with MRS. BLOOD-*

GOOD.) Everything will be all right, we have plenty of time.

PERRY (*down R., feeling his way*). Plenty of time? Why, of course you have—take my word for it.

EVA. Will you do me a favor, Frank?

PERRY. Yes.

EVA (*at top of table R.*). Then go round to Madame Jolivet's—I have an account there—and tell them to send us up some evening dresses, and to charge them. I'll give you the sizes.

PERRY. May I ask what the occasion is?

MRS. BLOODGOOD. All you have to do is to go to Madame What's-her-name, send the things up and pay the bill—that shall be your punishment. (EVA and MRS. BLOODGOOD *up stage*.)

ANNIE. We are all going. (*Dancing.*)

PERRY (*still at sea*). Why, of course—

LULU. Are you going to dance with me, Frank?

PERRY. Where? Why, certainly.

EVA. Oh, give it up, Frank. You intended to surprise us, but now the secret is out—Mr. Morrison told us about the reception at your Lodge to-morrow evening. (*Crosses R.*)

PERRY. Is that all he told you?

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Was there anything more to tell?

PERRY. Oh! No, no! (*cross C. to MRS. BLOODGOOD*).

PERRY (*has himself in hand now*). I'll give Morrison a piece of my mind! He has nearly spoiled everything.

ANNIE. Oh, no, no!

PERRY. Yes, he did. (*The girls are L., EVA R.*)

EVA. Don't quarrel with him, dear, he meant it well.

LULU. You must be very nice to him when he comes. (*Goes to MRS. BLOODGOOD.*)

PERRY (*worried*). Is he coming back?

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*goes across stage*). Yes, later in the afternoon. Come, girls, we'll have our hands full to get ready. Eva will give you a list of the things we want. (*Takes girls across stage, exit R.I.*)

(PERRY goes L.C.)

EVA. Don't look so cross—we'll make ourselves beautiful; father and you will be proud of us. (*Kisses him.*) I shall have to hurry up if I'm to get these girls' frocks ready.

(Exit R.I.)

PERRY (*alone*). Father—well, Frankie, your goose is cooked! I don't know where I am. I'd better make a clean breast of it to the old man and throw myself upon his mercy. But first I must brace up for the ordeal. (*Goes into dining-room, where he is seen mixing a drink for himself.*)

(Enter BLOODGOOD from L.C.)

BLOODGOOD. I believe Frank suspects me. (*Goes to L.*) He looked at me very suspiciously when the women folks talked about the Lodge. I think it would be a wise move to take him into my confidence before the inevitable crash comes.

PERRY (*up R.C.*). Oh, father, have a drink?

BLOODGOOD. No, thank you. (PERRY comes down R.C., glass in hand.) Frank—er—my dear Frank—I don't call you brother because—

PERRY (*good-naturedly*). Yes, let's drop the brother.

BLOODGOOD. Quite right, let us drop the "brother."

PERRY (*laughs*). Oh, you've noticed—

BLOODGOOD. Yes, I noticed that—

PERRY. That I'm not a "mason"—I thought so. (*Turns away R., drinks.*)

BLOODGOOD (*delighted*). What? (*Goes a few steps L., expressing joy and relief.*)

PERRY. Good luck, father. (*Drinks.*) Thank Heaven it is out. I had promised Eva to join, but unfortunately, I forgot all about it. I was afraid she would be angry, so I let her think I had joined. (*He puts his glass on table and turns back to BLOODGOOD.*)

(BLOODGOOD *laughs to himself, but the moment PERRY turns, he faces him sternly.*)

(*Laughingly.*) Imagine my dismay when you appeared on the scene—ha—ha—ha— (*The laugh dies on his face as he looks at BLOODGOOD. Sits down at top of table R.*)

BLOODGOOD (*pompously, with mock severity*). No wonder you were dismayed. I noticed the deception from the start. I didn't say anything because I wanted to see how far you would go!

PERRY (*rises, goes up R.*) It was a harmless fib. I'm going to get proposed to-morrow.

BLOODGOOD (*quickly*). Don't you dare! I shall use all my influence to keep you out of it.

PERRY. I didn't think you'd take it that way father.

BLOODGOOD. What right had you to think I'd take it any other way? You ought to be ashamed of yourself. (*Take stage.*) Masonry is built on truth—the least deception is foreign to the ethics of the order. (*Swaggers down L.*)

PERRY. All right—then I won't join, but for Heaven's sake don't tell mother, or she'll never lend me the \$20,000. (*Takes stage R.*)

BLOODGOOD (L.C.) Do you mean to imply, sir, that my wife holds the purse strings? You won't get the money now under any circumstances.

PERRY. But, my dear father—

BLOODGOOD (*crosses to R.I.*) I'm sick of this business—and don't you dare to apply for admission. (*Loudly.*) Do you hear, sir?

PERRY (*sits down wearily*). You are speaking loud enough.

BLOODGOOD (*quietly*). That's all right. (*loudly*) Don't you dare! (*Gets right to door, throws coat open conceitedly.*) Am I a Mason? (*Swaggers off.*)

(*Exit R.I.*)

PERRY (C.). I'll never tell the truth again. (*Goes L. and round front of sofa to C.*)

(*Enter FISHER quickly.*)

FISHER. Hello, Frank. Where's Annie?

PERRY. In there.

FISHER. Couldn't I see her for a moment?

PERRY. No. The old lady is about. You got me into a nice hole.

FISHER. I? How's that? Didn't you tell your wife you were a mason?

PERRY (*up C.*). I did—and so far so good—I got on swimmingly, but just then the Worshipful Master turned up with the whole family.

FISHER (*comes down R.C. laughing*). I say, that is funny. (*Sits and laughs R.C.*)

PERRY. Don't laugh! You might lose control of your face. (*Sits on table.*)

FISHER. You would laugh if you were in my place. So the old fellow found you out?

PERRY. I was getting tangled up more and more every minute—so I decided to make a clean breast of it to him. (*Goes L. of FISHER.*)

FISHER. Didn't the humor of the situation strike him?

PERRY. Evidently not! He read me the riot act and lectured me like a school boy. The worst of all is, that the money I counted on is as good as gone.

FISHER. That's too bad.

PERRY. I don't know what I'm going to do. (*goes up C.*)

FISHER. Where are you going? (*Rises, goes to PERRY.*)

PERRY. I promised to go to Madame Jolivet's and tell them to send up some things for the girls. (*Stops.*) No—can't leave the house. I have to lay in wait for that fellow Morrison. (*Comes down C.*) Won't you go for me, George? I'll get you the list of the things. (*Makes a movement to go up.*)

FISHER (*thoughtfully*). Wait—wait—didn't you say Madame Jolivet's?

PERRY. They are in a hurry.

FISHER. Wait, I say. (*Pause.*) By Jove! I

have it! Frank, (*very impressively*) I got you into this hole, I'll pull you out again.

PERRY. A new scheme?

FISHER. And a great one. Listen, didn't you tell me yesterday morning of some youthful marriage of the old man's? Some woman who was supposed to have committed suicide on his account?

PERRY. Yes—Angeline—what of it?

FISHER (*brings him down C.*). Now supposing a daughter of the long-mourned Angeline turned up? You are the sole possessor of the secret—wouldn't the old man be like a piece of putty in your hands?

PERRY (*enthusiastically*). By jingo, you are right! (*Crosses to L.*) (*Downhearted again.*) No—no—I can't enter into your new scheme—my nerve is all gone.

FISHER. I shan't need you—all you'll have to do is to arrange a meeting between the old man and the girl.

PERRY. But the girl—where are you going to get the girl.

FISHER. She stands before you.

PERRY. You?

FISHER. Yes, I. I've played Charlie's Aunt and now I'm going to play the little French milliner—Fanchon Armitage.

PERRY. What, the girl at Madame Jolivet's?

FISHER. A very disinterested young person—for a little consideration she will lend us a helping hand.

PERRY (*with enthusiasm*). George, I'm yours for life if you can see through this successfully.

FISHER. That's all right, my boy. By the way, have you a photo of Angelina's faithless

lover in his younger days?

PERRY (*L., takes a picture from mantle.*). Here is one.

FISHER. I can't say much for Angeline's taste—however, it will answer my purpose. (*Pockets it.*) I'm off now—there's not a second to be lost.

PERRY. Wait for me downstairs. I'll get the list.

FISHER. Come, let's hurry up.

(*Both exeunt R.2.*)

(Enter BLOODGOOD with hat and cane R.I.)

BLOODGOOD. The young rascal! Passes himself off as a mason. I wonder how he ever hit upon that dodge—I thought it was original with me. Well, it takes a clever fellow to keep it up for twenty years. (*Crosses C., turn up.*)

(Enter MRS. BLOODGOOD R.I.)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Wait a minute, Amos. I have something important to tell you.

BLOODGOOD. Well?

MRS. BLOODGOOD. A young man has been here—he proposed for Lulu's hand.

BLOODGOOD. You don't say so.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. He seemed a very nice and steady young man—

BLOODGOOD. That's good—for I am sorry to say the young men nowadays are of little account as a whole.

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*sneeringly*). Indeed? What about the young men of your time?

BLOODGOOD (*evasively*). What do you mean?

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Remember, Angeline!

BLOODGOOD (*at back of sofa L.*) For Heaven's sake, Caroline, let the poor creature rest in peace. Who is your prospective son-in-law —what is he?

MRS. BLOODGOOD. I haven't had any chance to make any inquiries. His name is Morrison —he told me that he is an architect. The one thing greatly in his favour is, that he is a mason! (*Take stage C.*)

BLOODGOOD (*startled—drops his hat behind the sofa.*) A mason!!? (*Forgets himself; loudly*) That won't do!

MRS. BLOODGOOD. What won't do?

BLOODGOOD (*trying to get out of it—comes to her*). Er—let me see—Morrison—Morrison—did you say Morrison was his name?

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Do you know him?

BLOODGOOD. No—but—er—I did happen to hear that he was rather fast—although perhaps that wouldn't make any difference.

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*sarcastically*). Oh, it wouldn't, eh?

BLOODGOOD. A young fellow has to sow his wild oats—he'll be all right after he gets married and—

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*excited*). I beg to differ with you on that point!

BLOODGOOD. I think he was named as co-respondent in a divorce case—but that does not concern us. I guess he's all right otherwise.

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*C.*). Is he indeed? So, you suppose for one moment that I am going to trust my daughter's happiness to a man like that?

BLOODGOOD. Come — come — Caroline, we can't all be saints. I dare say he is a nice enough young fellow.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. How dare you? How dare you take his part? Of course, a dissolute fellow like that would suit you for a son-in-law. What a nice companion he would be, if you chose to go back to your old ways. (*Crosses R.*) I'll tell Lulu at once to put that reprobate out of her head.

BLOODGOOD (*uneasily.*) Break it gently to her, Caroline.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. I know exactly how to break it to her.

(*Exit R.I.*)

BLOODGOOD (*laughs*). That settles Morrison. (*Calls.*) Caroline!

(*Exit R.I. after her.*)

(LOTTIE enters, followed by TRAVERS R. 2)

TRAVERS. Take my name to the ladies, fair Delilah. (*Pats her cheek.*)

LOTTIE. I'll not thank you for callin' me names, sorr.

(TRAVERS crosses L.)

Lottie's me name.

TRAVERS. A very charming name, my dear. Should Mr. Perry happen to be in, tell him I'm calling on business about the Lodge.

LOTTIE (*draws away from him*). Are ye one of them ruffians too? I'll not stay in this house another day.

(Exit, running off R.2 in terror.)

(PERRY enters brightly from music-room,
sees TRAVERS.)

PERRY (*curtly*). You here again!

TRAVERS. The ladies were good enough to ask me to call soon again—and, as a gentleman, I had to respond to a wish expressed by such charming lips.

PERRY (*quite loud*.) Enough of that tomfoolery—get out of here, or by Jove——

TRAVERS. My dear brother Perry——

(Enter MRS. BLOODGOOD, ANNIE and EVA R.I.)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. What is all this noise here? Oh, Mr. Travers! (EVA behind sofa.)

ANNIE (R.). So glad you came!

EVA (*at back sofa R.*). We were going to ask my husband to send for you.

TRAVERS (*to PERRY*). Do you hear that? (*To the ladies*.) You were really too kind!

MRS. BLOODGOOD (R.C.). What brings you back so soon?

TRAVERS. Er—some business connected with the Lodge—er—yes—I am taking up a collection—for a masonic charity.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. I hope my son-in-law will distinguish himself as a new member by a large contribution.

TRAVERS. We just had some words on that account. (*Annie comes to MRS. BLOODGOOD*.) Brother Perry insisted on giving \$100—I argued it was too much. (*EVA crosses to desk*.)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Not for such a worthy charity.

TRAVERS. Oh, well, madam, if you think so. (*To PERRY.*) Well, brother Perry, write out a check for one hundred.

EVA. Sit down here, Frank. (*Pointing to desk.*)

PERRY (*as he passes TRAVERS, aside.*). This is blackmail, you scoundrel. (*To desk—write check.*)

TRAVERS (*aside.*) My revenge. .

(PERRY writes check—EVA stands behind him.

MRS. BLOODGOOD goes sits sofa L.)

ANNIE. Mr. Travers, I have a great favor to ask of you. Mamma wants me to recite something at the reception to-morrow evening.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. And we thought you might help us with your vast experience. (*Crosses L.*)

TRAVERS (*comes down c.*). I am your man, madam. A recitation? Wouldn't you rather do something a little better—a little sketch—or playlet as they call it.

ANNIE. Oh, that would be delightful! Do you think I could do it?

TRAVERS. Certainly. (*Goes to ANNIE.*) I have a little play in my pocket. (*Produces manuscript*) It has not been produced yet—it is at your disposal. (*Gives it to her.*) We might run through the lines.

ANNIE. Oh, charming! (*Goes down R. looking at it.*)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. What is the title?

(ANNIE sits R. of table R.)

TRAVERS. "The Last Highball."

ANNIE (*laughs*). A comedy?

MRS. BLOODGOOD. What is the plot?

TRAVERS (*to Mrs. BLOODGOOD*). There is a wife who is in the habit of taking stimulants, and her husband is trying to break her of it. The play has a very good moral. Will you be kind enough to get me a bottle of rye and some devilled kidneys?

PERRY. No! What's that for?

TRAVERS. A prop—props are essential at rehearsals.

EVA. We have some fine old rye, Mr. Travers, but I don't think that we have any devilled kidneys in the house.

TRAVERS. No devilled kidneys? No devilled kidneys? That's too bad. The devilled kidneys were the funniest things in the play. They laughed themselves to death at the devilled kidneys—but perhaps I might make a couple of chicken sandwiches do.

EVA. I'll see what I can do for you. (*Goes up*)

TRAVERS. Oh, Mrs. Perry, I prefer the liver wing.

EVA. I'll get it for you.

(*She exits into dining-room R.C.*)

TRAVERS. Ah, thank you. Thank you, madam. (*Points to stage.*) Now this is the stage. (*Points to audience.*) There is the audience—here the manuscript. You play Mary, the young wife. I'll be Charley, the husband. (*Sits L. of table R.*)

ANNIE (*looking into MS.*). It says here "an idiot."

TRAVERS. Ah! (*Points to PERRY.*) You are the idiot!

(Enter EVA with plate, bottle and glass.)

PERRY (*jumps up*). What's that! (*Comes to C.*)

TRAVERS (*explaining—jumps up*). A lunatic—a chap crazed by excessive drink.

PERRY. That's in your line—why don't you play it?

TRAVERS. I'm Charley, the young husband
(*Takes sandwich.*)

MRS. BLOODGOOD
and
EVA. } Come, Frank—just for
the fun of it.

PERRY (*resigned*). All right. What do you want me to do? (*Gnashes his teeth at TRAVERS.*)

TRAVERS. Splendid! Wonderful! The very thing.

ANNIE (*laughs.*) I never thought you could make such a stupid face, Frank.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. It looks so natural.

PERRY (*furiously*). I want to know what I've got to do?

TRAVERS. Just stick to that tone—you are a born actor. Now, you hide behind the screen. (*Points to desk.*) There's the screen. So, now you are behind the screen—you watch me drink, and get very angry.

PERRY. I am—I am so angry I could—
(*Starts C.*)

TRAVERS. You are all right. Just hold that a minute. (*Claps sandwich in PERRY's hand, he throws it in fireplace.*) Now let us begin. (*Sits*

chair R., pours out a stiff drink.) You have the first line, Miss Bloodgood: "Come, Charley, have a drink—"

ANNIE (*amateurishly*). "Come, Charley, have a drink—" (*Makes awkward gesture.*)

TRAVERS. I will. (*Drinks and refills glass.*) Very good. (*Pours out another.*) But pardon me, Miss Bloodgood, doesn't it say: "Have another drink" in the manuscript?

ANNIE (*looks into book*). Oh, yes—"Come, Charley, have another drink."

TRAVERS. I will. (*Drinks and refills again.*) Ah! I didn't know the part was such a good one. Very good, but you ought to emphasize the word "drink" a little more.

ANNIE. "Drink!" a little more.

TRAVERS. I will. (*Drinks and refills.*)

PERRY (*angrily*). I say, leave some manuscript in that glass. I mean some bottle in that manuscript—I—ch!

TRAVERS. Not a bit like it! You ought to be mad.

PERRY. I am mad! I am ready for a lunatic asylum. (*Come to C.*)

TRAVERS. That's it—my boy—that's it.

(LOTTIE enters R. 2.)

LOTTIE. Two ladies from Madam Jollitie, ma'am.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. At last.

ANNIE. Our things. (*Rise, go R.*) Please excuse us—we must go and try them on.

TRAVERS. Certainly, ladies. I'll call again tomorrow for a dress rehearsal!

(MRS. BLOODGOOD, EVA, ANNIE and LOTTIE
exeunt R. I.)

PERRY. If you ever set foot in my house again I'll murder you.

TRAVERS. But, my dear brother——

PERRY. If you don't get out I'll hit you.

TRAVERS. I always knew you were not a gentleman. Good day, sir. Excuse me.

(TRAVERS tries to get hold of bottle—PERRY rushes at him. TRAVERS dodges and exits R.2.)

(Enter LOTTIE from R.I.)

LOTTIE. Missus wants the ladies from the store to wait here. (To R.2.) Come in here and make yersilves comfortable until the missus wants ye.

(Enter FISHER and FANCHON ARMITAGE, dressed exactly alike. They cross to sofa L. and sit simultaneously, FANCHON R. of sofa, FISHER L.)

(Exit LOTTIE R.I.)

(Enter PERRY and slaps FANCHON on shoulder.)

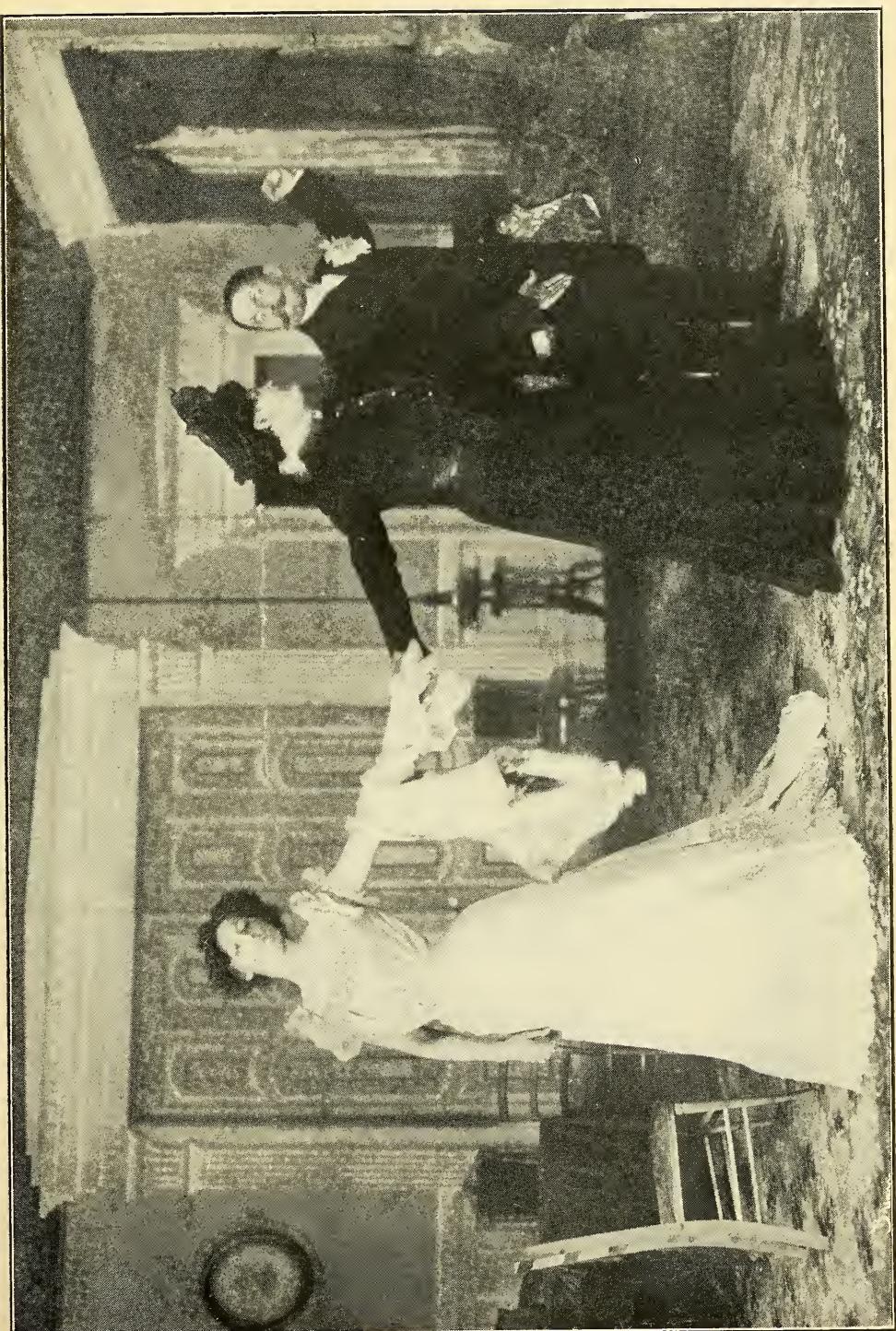
PERRY (laughingly, as he slaps FANCHON on back.) By Jove, George, you look great!

FANCHON (gives a little scream). Oh, monsieur?

FISHER (laughing). Don't you know a woman when you see one, you silly ass? Ha, Ha!

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"ARE YOU A MASON?"



PERRY (*looks from one to another*). No?
Well, that beats me!

FANCHON. Oh, Monsieur Fisher, I am so frightened! If I lose my position?

FISHER. Don't worry, everything will be all right. Not even Frank knew me.

(Enter LOTTIE R. I.)

LOTTIE. Mrs. Perry wants the fitter.

(Exit R. 2.)

FISHER (*loud*). Allez vous en, ma chere.
(Gives her a little shove.)

FANCHON. Oh, mon Dieu!

(Exit R.2.)

PERRY. Man alive, you are great!

FISHER. Where's the old man?

(Enter BLOODGOOD R.I.)

PERRY. Hush!

BLOODGOOD. Where the dickens did I leave my hat? (*Crosses stage to C.*) I can't find my hat. (*Goes up C.*)

PERRY (*loud, to FISHER*). I'm afraid, miss, you'll have to wait a little while.

FISHER. Merci, monsieur, that is nothing.

BLOODGOOD (*up R.C., sees FISHER, whistles*). Phew! That's a stunner.

PERRY. What are you looking for, father?

BLOODGOOD. My hat—I want to go out to get some cigars. (*Crosses stage, keeps his eyes riveted on FISHER, who ogles him.*) I say,

Frank, have you—er—a decent cigar in the house?

(FISHER flirting with BLOODGOOD.)

PERRY (*takes out case.*) Are these good enough for you?

BLOODGOOD (*without looking at them—keeping eyes on FISHER.*) Too strong for me, Frank, too strong. Er—would you mind going and getting me some, I can't find my hat. (*Pretends to look for hat, he sees it and quickly kicks it under the sofa.*)

FISHER (*aside*). He's nibbling—get out!

PERRY (*aside to FISHER*). This is delicious. (*Loud, to BLOODGOOD.*) Don't bother, I'll go down where I always buy my cigars, at Grunebaum's. It's quite a distance though. (*Exits R. 2.*)

BLOODGOOD (*quickly*). You needn't hurry back, Frank, take your time. (*Going up R.—shuts door R. 2., then down R.; then smiles at FISHER. Goes up to FISHER, who is standing L.C.*) What is your name, my dear?

FISHER. Fanchon, monsieur.

BLOODGOOD. Fanchon, eh? A very pretty name—almost as pretty as the bearer—he—he—he—won't you sit down?

FISHER. Merci, monsieur, vous êtes très aimable.

BLOODGOOD. Don't you speak English, my dear?

FISHER. Yes, mestre—not so good.

BLOODGOOD. You know ladies always like to take time when they try on dresses. (*Pats FISHER'S hand.*) Come, sit down, my child, you'll tire your pretty little feet.

FISHER (*coquettishly shows his foot*). Dey not so small as monsieur tink.

BLOODGOOD (*looking*). But they are! Oh, do sit down. To please me.

FISHER. Eh bien, to please monsieur. (*They go and sit sofa L., BLOODGOOD R., FISHER L.*) Oh, you are so kind—(*sighs*)—so sympathetic —your face is ver' familiar—I do not know—so ver' familiar.

BLOODGOOD. Familiar—how's that?

FISHER. Oh, it remin' me of a ver' dear friend.

BLOODGOOD. You little rogue! He—he—how could I help being kind to a pretty girl like you? (*Takes hand, pats it.*)

FISHER. Oh, monsieur, you make me blush red.

BLOODGOOD. Have you a sweetheart?

FISHER. Oh, monsieur, I am too young.

BLOODGOOD. If you could make up your mind to be nice to me— (*Pats his hand again.*)

FISHER. Oh, this is so sudden. (*Draws away from him.*)

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*off R.*) Amos, where are you?

BLOODGOOD. The devil! Coming, dear, coming. (*Crosses stage to door R.I.*) Don't go—I'll be back in a jiffy. (*Throws kiss.*) Little pet!

(*Exit R.I.*)

FISHER (*returns kiss*). Mon cheri! (*Laughs.*) I'm getting on like a house afire. (*Across stage and back with manly strides to emphasize his being a man—then gets L.*)

(EVA enters quickly R. 2.)

EVA. The other young lady is busy with my sisters. You had better attend to me—here's the tape measure. Look at this skirt—how does it hang?

FISHER (*aside*). Great Scott! (*Embarrassed*) Oh—er—madam—er—it — er — hangs all the way down.

EVA. I think the underskirt shows at the back? (*Looks at it*) Yes, it does. Put a pin in it.

FISHER (*horrified*). Pin it?

EVA (*a little impatient*). Yes, pin it!

FISHER (*feels himself over helplessly for a pin—finally takes hatpin out of hat and pins skirt with it*). Voila, madam!

EVA. Is it all right now? (*Goes R.*)

FISHER. Oh, oui, madam. I put a pin in it.

EVA. I think it hangs well otherwise?

FISHER (*come to R.C.*). Oh, it must, when one has a figure like madam.

EVA. Oh, thank you.

FISHER. I think the figure of madam and myself are very much the same.

EVA. You think so—what corset do you wear?

FISHER. The straight front. Down in ze front—up in ze back—it is all the style, the Kangeroo. It gives the beautiful lines.

EVA (*flattered*). I am getting a little stout.

FISHER. Madam is just right.

EVA (*laughs*). Thank you. Now look at the waist.

FISHER (*walks round her awkwardly*). It is very pretty, but I think, madam, with her fair complexion and dark hair ought to wear ze baby blue—perhaps with—box pleats run-

ning around her—with yellow butterflies insertion applique on green panne velvet.

EVA (*with gesture*). No, I don't think I should like the box pleats.

(Enter PERRY R.2.)

PERRY. Here are your cigars, father. (Sees FISHER.) What's this?

(FISHER, *behind EVA'S back, motions him to shut up.*)

EVA. Sit down, Frank, the girl is fitting my new dress.

PERRY. The other one is the fitter.

EVA. This one is just as good.

FISHER. Yes, I'm just as good.

(FISHER fumbles round EVA'S waist—he looks at PERRY and smiles. PERRY glares at FISHER, his fists clinched behind his back.)

EVA. Don't stare at the girl, Frank, you make her nervous. Oh, you tickle me!

PERRY (*madly*). How dare you tickle my wife?

FISHER. Pardon, monsieur.

EVA. What is the matter with you, Frank—sit down!

(PERRY sits R.C. and keeps his eyes riveted on FISHER.)

EVA (*points to waist line*). I think it wants to be taken in a little—just here. It's too loose.

FISHER. Perhaps if monsieur will fetch a pair of scissors I will cut him.

EVA. Cut it. Certainly not. Take it in.

FISHER. Take him in.

EVA. Yes, just put a pin in it, you had better pin it. Give her a pair of scissors, Frank.

FISHER (*gets another hatpin out of his hat and tries to pin the waist*). Oui, madam!

EVA. Ouch!

PERRY (*jumps up*). What now?

EVA. She hurt me.

PERRY (*to FISHER*). If you can't do better than that—you'd better get out! (*Up stage*.)

EVA. She is all right, but you frighten her.

FISHER. Oui, madam, he frighten me—my heart go pitti-pat and my hand shake so while monsieur is here.

EVA. Let her alone, Frank. Now take my waist measure first. (*Hands him tape*.)

FISHER. Ah—round here. (*Indicates waist*.) PERRY *up stage threatens him: he hesitates. EVA looks around, catches him*.)

EVA. Whatever are you doing, Frank?

FISHER. I think madam, he is trying to flirt with me. (*FRANK, disgusted, goes up stage*.)

EVA. Well, come on.

FISHER. Oui, madam, I come on. (*Measure waist; quickly*) "73."

EVA. What!

FISHER. I got the wrong side upside down. (*Has looked at the wrong side, quickly corrects himself*) Oh, "23."

EVA. That's more like it.

FISHER. Yes, 23 is better than 73 round here (*Indicates waist*.)

EVA. I should think so. Now measure—

PERRY (*shouts*). Somebody's coming!

EVA. Somebody's coming? Come to another room, please. (*She exits R. 2.*)

(FISHER makes movement to follow her: PERRY darts between him and the door. FISHER runs off L. C. screaming with laughter, followed by PERRY. FANCHON enters quickly from R.2. BLOODGOOD enters almost at the same time from R.I., sneaks up to FANCHON, puts his arms round her.)

BLOODGOOD. Going, little one?

FANCHON (*slaps his face*). You crazy! Old fool!

(*Exit quickly R.I.*)

BLOODGOOD (*looks at his hand*). Well, I declare! (*Turns away L.*)

(FISHER, who saw the little scene, appears in doorway, gets R. of BLOODGOOD, and looks at him with a seductive smile the moment he turns again.)

FISHER. Pardon, m'sieu, I didn't know it was you.

BLOODGOOD (*begins to beam again*). You are a little spitfire. Are you sorry?

FISHER. Very sorry.

BLOODGOOD. I'm glad you didn't run away.

FISHER. I could not—you are so sympathetic—I like you.

BLOODGOOD. Do you really?

FISHER. Oh, very much.

BLOODGOOD (*coming to FISHER again, leads him to chair L. of table.*) Couldn't we meet somewhere—quite informally? How would you like to go to a little lunch with me at the Waldorf?

FISHER. Ah, certainly. (*Pretends to blush, turns away.*)

BLOODGOOD. I could call at your house for you—

(BLOODGOOD *brings chair and sits L. of FISHER.*)

FISHER (*quickly*). Oh, non, not there.

BLOODGOOD. Why not?

FISHER. My reputation—and I have only such a little apartment.

BLOODGOOD. And where do you live?

FISHER. One Hundred and Seventy-Five Street.

BLOODGOOD. With your parents?

FISHER (*sadly*). Oh, non, monsieur, I live by myself only. (*Tearfully.*) I have nobody.

BLOODGOOD. Poor little girl.

FISHER. My mamma is dead long ago.

(Leans head against BLOODGOOD's shoulder.)

BLOODGOOD. And your father? (*Puts his arms round him.*)

FISHER. I never had a papa!

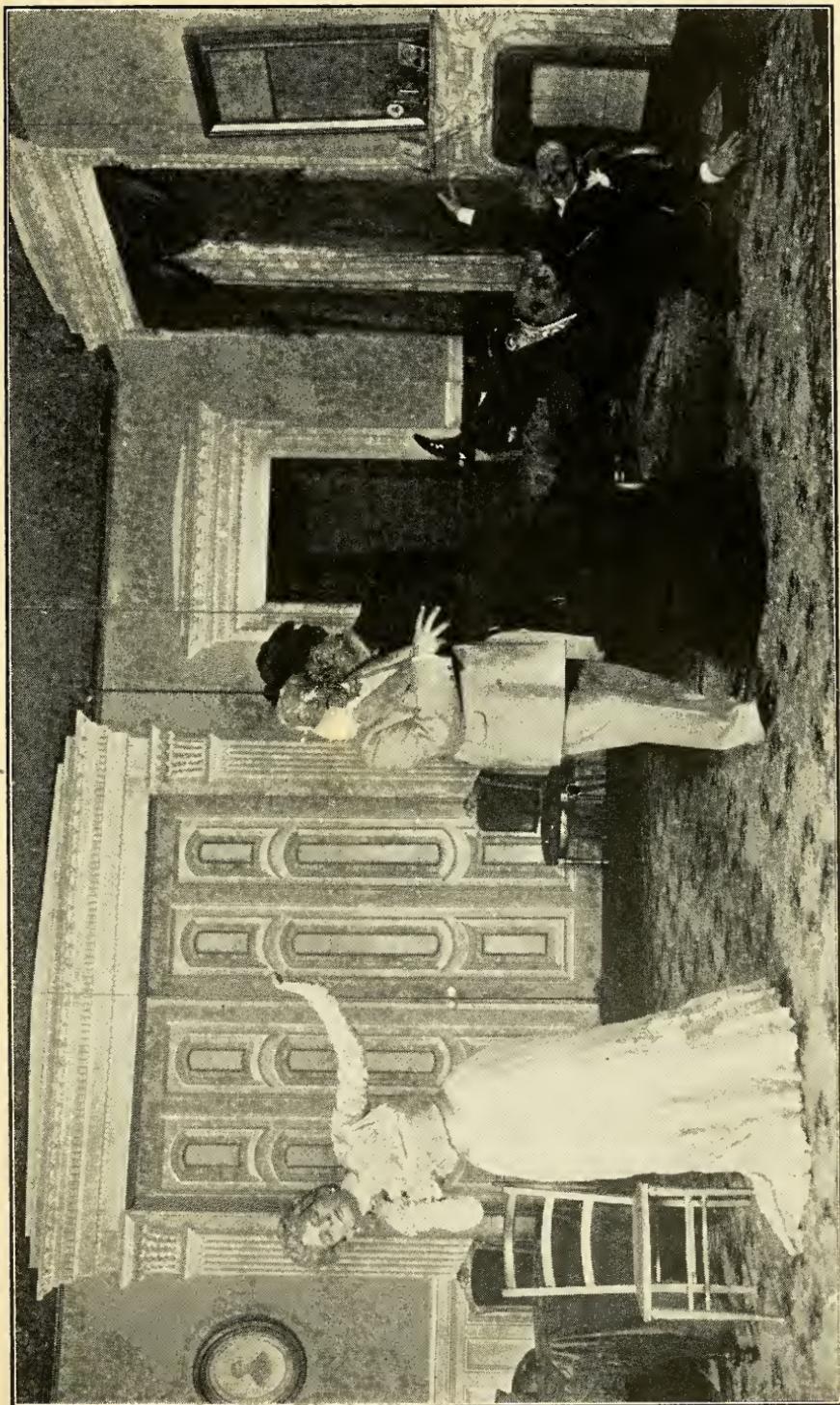
BLOODGOOD. How extraordinary!

FISHER. Oui—he gave mamma the—what you call—ze shake.

BLOODGOOD. The wretch!

FISHER. Oh, do not speak so unkindly of him. Mamma love him—ah, so much; she always carry his picture and she give it to me. Look, perhaps you can 'elp me find papa. (*Hands him photo.*)

BLOODGOOD (*takes it.*) Let us see—maybe I know the scoundrel. (*Looks at it.*) Great Heavens! (*Rise, go C.*) Is it possible? This is my—what was the name of your mother?



FISHER. Angeline.

BLOODGOOD. Not Angeline Fichu? (*Throws photo on sofa L.*)

FISHER. Yes—Angeline Fichu—she kept a millinery shop.

BLOODGOOD. Angeline Fichu—what now? (*Goes to chair and sits again.*)

FISHER (*takes picture, looks at it—looks at BLOODGOOD*). Mon Dieu—is it possible? Mais oui—it is—it is! I have found him—oh, papa—mon cher papa—embrasse la fille de ton Ange-line. Take to your heart the daughter of Ange-line. (*Throws himself at BLOODGOOD'S feet.*)

BLOODGOOD. Hush! hush!

FISHER. Oh, my papa!

BLOODGOOD. Hush—keep quiet—calm your-self!

FISHER (*as if he were rousing himself after a dream*). Is it true? (*Weeps.*) I cannot be-lieve it—oh, mon papa—je suis si heureuse—oh, I am so 'appy, so 'appy. (*Buries his face in his hands, his arms rest on BLOODGOOD'S knees.*)

BLOODGOOD (*flustered and worried*). Yes—yes—but keep quiet, my daughter. I'll provide for you. (*He gently pushes FISHER away, rises and crosses L.*)

FISHER (*L., drying his eyes*). Oh, chere ma-man in ze 'eaven, I 'ave a papa. (*He throws himself at BLOODGOOD.*) A nice, good papa!

(BLOODGOOD frightened, watching the door, holds him at bay.)

(*Pouting.*) Don't you love your little daugh-ter, papa?

BLOODGOOD. Yes, darling. (*Takes him into*

his arms.) But you must not scream so. First of all, you don't go back to the shop.

FISHER. Oh, mon papa.

BLOODGOOD. I'll start you in business.

FISHER. On Fifth Avenue?

BLOODGOOD. How much would that cost?

FISHER. Oh, not more than \$20,000.

BLOODGOOD. Is that all? You shall have it; only do me the favor of keeping quiet.

FISHER. My papa! (*Violent embrace.*)

BLOODGOOD (*throws his arms round him.*)
My daughter! (*PERRY enters L.C.*)

(MRS. BLOODGOOD enters R.I. *in a new dress.*)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. How do you like this?
(Screams.) Amos!

BLOODGOOD. Caroline! (*Cross L.*)

(*Last two speeches together.*)

PERRY. The explosion?

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*highly indignant*). Oh, you—you—you !!! How dare you carry on an intrigue with a shop-girl in your daughter's house?

BLOODGOOD. Caroline—I beg of you, let me explain—

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Out of my sight, monster!

FISHER. Oh, madam—

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Silence, hussy!

(Enter EVA R.2.)

BLOODGOOD (*Cross c., pulling himself together.*) Stop, Caroline! (*Draws FISHER tenderly towards him.*) Do with me as you please—but don't insult this innocent child! I alone am the guilty one. This—this is my long-

neglected daughter—the child of Angeline.

PERRY (*unseen by those on stage—shaking with laughter*). This is too rich!

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Another of your lies?

BLOODGOOD. No—no—Caroline, I am speaking the truth—this *is* Angeline's daughter—she told me so a moment ago.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. You never told me there was a daughter?

BLOODGOOD. I did not know it myself.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. And you dare to bring this living proof of your faithlessness before my very eyes?

BLOODGOOD. Caroline, that was before we were married.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. I don't care, everything is over between us! Begone and take your daughter with you. (*Goes R.*)

EVA. Mother, how can you be so unforgiving?

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Do you expect me to open my arms to that——?

FISHER (*pretends to cry.*) Oh, mamma.

(WARN CURTAIN.)

BLOODGOOD. My poor child!

EVA. Well, if everybody casts her off I'll take her up—come to my sisterly heart! (*Goes embraces FISHER.*)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. What?

BLOODGOOD. My daughter!

PERRY (*laugh dies from his face—comes on*). I protest. (*To FISHER.*) Leave this house instantly!

BLOODGOOD. Very well—come, my child, we'll leave this house together.

(ANNIE and LULU enter R.I.)

EVA. Annie—Lulu—this is our sister!

LULU. Not really!

EVA. She wants to leave us again—help me to persuade her to stay with us!

ANNIE
and } (together). You must!
LULU

PERRY. We have no room for her!

ANNIE. She can share my room.

LULU. She can share mine too.

(They embrace FISHER.)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. And I say "no!"

EVA. Then she'll stop with us! (Kisses her.)

PERRY. I'll throw her out of the window.

BLOODGOOD. We shall see!

PERRY. We shall!

(EVA, ANNIE and LULU surround FISHER, embrace and kiss him.)

FISHER (returns their embraces.) To please you, sisters, I will stay!

PERRY (trying to get at FISHER). Are you all mad?

BLOODGOOD. If you dare to lay hands on that child!

PERRY. Ha—ha—child!

(HALTON enters, red as a lobster, dripping with perspiration. He taps BLOODGOOD on shoulder. BLOODGOOD, to whom his re-appearance is the last straw, collapses on arm of sofa.) All show surprise.

CURTAIN.

ACT III

PROPERTIES

Fish Globe and Pedestal L. to be brought forward—the chair to be placed against scene in its place. All other set properties as before.

SCENE—Same.

(When curtain rises, discovered EVA back of table, FISHER L. of table (as FANCHON), LULU R. of table. The GIRLS are humming some song while sewing—FISHER sews on a ragged-looking ruche with a heavy long thread—he is awkward: after a few seconds he stops sewing and sighs. ANNIE keeps looking at him all the time and shakes her head. ANNIE on sofa L.)

EVA. You must not sigh like that, sister dear. Your troubles are over, and we are all so fond of you.

LULU. Mother has consented to your going home with us to Rockford, and some day a nice man will fall in love with you and marry you.

FISHER. That would be so nice.

EVA. You must be hungry—won't you have something? A piece of cake and lemonade?

FISHER. A piece of cake and lemonade? No, thank you, I'm not hungry. (*The thread slips out of his needle.*) Damn!

GIRLS (*shocked*). Fanchon!

FISHER. Oh, mille pardon—the girls in the shop teach me that. (*Tries to thread his needle.*)

ANNIE. These New York shop-girls must be horrid creatures.

FISHER (*quickly*). Oh, I don't know—they came very near spoiling me—oh, no—I mean yes—very horrid.

(LULU *sighs*.)

EVA What's the matter with *you*?

LULU. I'm worried about Ernest. This morning mother seemed quite favorably inclined towards him, and now all of a sudden I am not to think of him any more.

EVA. Cheer up, Lulu, mother was opposed to Frank in the beginning, but we got each other all the same.

LULU. Well, if it comes to the worst, we'll run away together.

EVA. Hush—there's mother.

(FISHER has in the meantime succeeded in threading his needle and is sewing industriously: all sing. Enter MRS. BLOODGOOD L.C.—watches the group.)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. How sweet they look there, sitting together.

(Looks at FISHER, who has redoubled his activity and sews with a thread longer than his arm. The third time MRS. BLOODGOOD, having dodged his hand previously, catches it in hers.)

How can you sew with such a long thread, Fanchon?

FISHER. Oh, madam, we have so much

thread in the shop where they teach me and they are not stingy. (*Pricks herself.*) Ouch! (BUS.)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Where is your thimble?

EVA (*hands him one*). Here, Fanchon, take mine!

FISHER. Merci! (*Looks at it—does not know on which finger to put it, finally puts it on fourth finger.* MRS. BLOODGOOD *takes it off and puts it on second finger of R. hand, gives it a little pat.*)

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*looks at his sewing*). I can see that your education has been sorely neglected.

(FISHER *sighs and acquiesces.*)

EVA. There—I've finished. (*Starts to go.*)

LULU. So have I.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Which one of you girls will look at this dress? (*Crosses R.*)

EVA. I will, mother. (*Exit with LULU R.I.*)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Fanchon, stand up. (*He does it.*) Fanchon, tell me—do you look anything like your mother?

FISHER. Madam, I am the perfect image of her

MRS. BLOODGOOD (R.C.). Is it possible? (*Crosses R.*) And I have been jealous of that woman for twenty years.

(*Exit R.I.*)

FISHER (*nods wearily*). Oui, madam. (*Sits as before.*)

(ANNIE *puts sewing on desk L.*)

I don't like my step-mamma!

ANNIE. Isn't mother a dear? (*Sitting L.*)

FISHER. She's a coo-coo!

ANNIE. What's that?

FISHER. A bird—a French term of endearment.

(*Pause—FISHER keeps on sewing.*)

FISHER. I am tired.

ANNIE. Why don't you stop?

FISHER. Shall I?

ANNIE. Come, sit near me and let's chat.

(*FISHER puts away sewing and stretches himself like a man, the seams of his dress crack and he quickly remembers his character—he sits on sofa next to ANNIE. ANNIE takes his hand and looks at him.*)

FISHER. What do you think when you look like that with your pretty grey eyes?

ANNIE. You look so much like somebody—

FISHER. Somebody you love?

ANNIE. I did at one time.

FISHER. And you love him no more?

ANNIE. I ought not to.

FISHER. Why not?

ANNIE. We heard he was bad and—

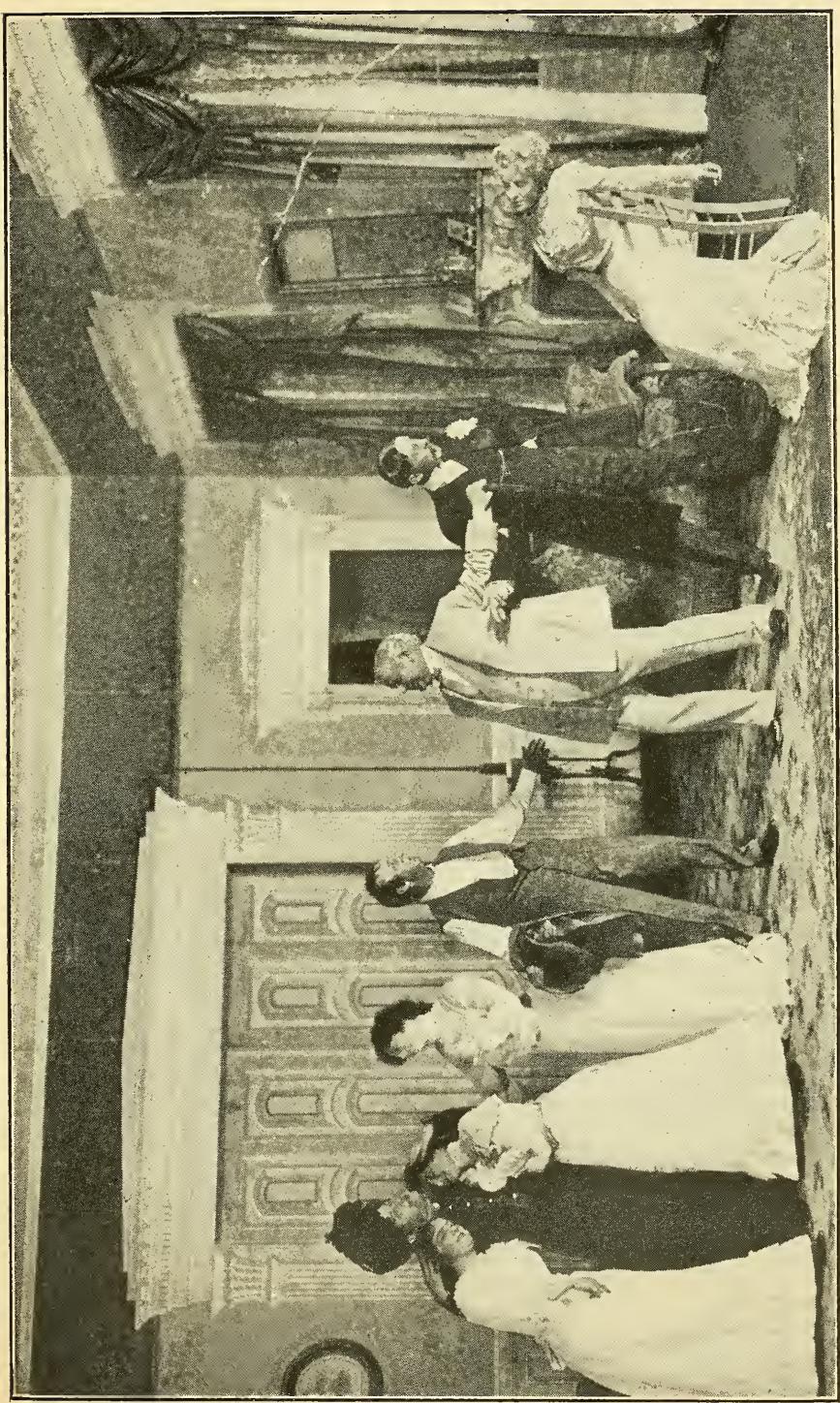
FISHER. That's a lie—that is no true—he love you—

ANNIE. How do you know?

FISHER. He could 'elp no more loving you than I could—a girl with a tooth like you have—a hair—a mouth—a feet, and hands—such pretty little hands. (*He presses her hands.*)

See Page 84

"ARE YOU A MASON?"



ANNIE (*embarrassed a little, with her eyes down*). Have you ever been in love?

FISHER (*sighs*). Oh, oui! Plenty of times!

ANNIE. How does it feel to be in love?

FISHER. Oh, pretty good.

ANNIE. Tell me—

(FISHER *conquers his desire to throw his arms around her*.)

Tell me—have you ever been kissed by a man?

FISHER (*emphatically*). Never ! ! !

ANNIE. Neither have I—

FISHER (*quickly*). Oh, you darling—really? I wonder if you will like it?

ANNIE (*naively*). I think I should like to be kissed by—er—George.

FISHER. By George! Is that whom you love?

ANNIE (*very modestly and naively*). Yes.

(FISHER, *tickled, crosses his legs—enjoys the situation*.)

I have told my secret—now you must tell me yours.

FISHER. I also am in love.

ANNIE. Are you really—is he nice?

FISHER. Oh, it is not a “he” at all.

ANNIE. Not a man? Who is it?

FISHER. My pretty little sister.

ANNIE. Oh! (*Rises*.) You love me like a sister. (*Pouts*.) Is he nice? Tell me—you are not acting like a friend.

FISHER. That is because we have not yet sealed our friendship—we must kiss. (*Goes to her*.)

ANNIE. Very well then—come on—one for

friendship (*kiss*), one for love (*kiss*), and one our faithfulness to prove. (*Kiss.*)

(FISHER *lingers on the last kiss—ANNIE drawing away from him, goes R.*)

FISHER. Why do you go away, don't you like to be kissed by me? (*Going to ANNIE.*)

ANNIE (*bashfully*). Yes.

FISHER. Then why do you stop? (*Kisses her again—three kisses.*) All good things are three.

ANNIE. It is so different—when I kiss other girls.

FISHER (*drops his dialect*). They weren't the right sort of girls (*on the point of laughing*) that's all. (*Kisses her again.*)

(ANNIE *screams—runs into a corner and hides her face in her hands.* FISHER *follows her—forces her to look at him: she, puzzled, puts her R. hand to his cheek, strokes it—discovers beard.*)

ANNIE. Oh, George, you mean thing. How dare you?

FISHER (*laughing*). Come—be a good little girl, Annie, look at me.

ANNIE. I'll never look at you again. I don't ever want to see your face again.

FISHER. You don't mean that.

ANNIE. I do—I do—I hate you.

FISHER. No, you don't.

ANNIE. I do—I do!

FISHER (*taking her hands*). I know better than that.

ANNIE. Don't exasperate me. Leave me

alone or I'll scratch your eyes out. (*Struggles to free herself.*)

FISHER (*counting on her fingers*). She loves me, she loves me not, etc., she loves me. Now you can't go against that. (*ANNIE laughs in spite of herself.*) Stop your giggling.

ANNIE (*looking up in astonishment*). Did you ever?

FISHER. Put your arm around my neck.

ANNIE. How dare you?

FISHER. Hush! Now say, My darling George!

ANNIE. I won't.

FISHER. Hush! My darling—my onliest own George.

ANNIE. You're an idiot!

FISHER. I know it. When are we going to be married?

ANNIE. Who told you I wanted to marry you?

FISHER. Your little finger.

ANNIE. George, why did you disguise yourself—to be near me?

FISHER (*ferventely*). Yes, darling, to be near you.

ANNIE. You dear, sweet boy.

FISHER (*quickly*). No—I can't lie to you—I did it to help a friend—you mustn't give us away.

ANNIE. On one condition—that you take those things off to-day.

FISHER. This instant—I'll tell Frank. (*Goes L. up stage—to door*). One more kiss. (*ANNIE goes R.*) You won't kiss your George?

ANNIE (*goes L.*). No—not now.

FISHER. Well, then, a farewell to Fanchon! (*French accent.*) You'll never see her more!

ANNIE (*goes to FISHER*). And she was so nice. (*They kiss.*)

(Enter PERRY L.C.)

PERRY (*from music-room*). Stop that! Excuse me (*turns away*), I thought it was my wife.

(ANNIE *gives a little scream and exits, runs off R.2.*)

(FISHER *makes a dash for the door R. 2.*)

PERRY (*after him*). Where are you going?

FISHER. Home—to get back into my trousers.

PERRY (*grabs him by the skirt*). Hold on, old man—take your time—what about me?

FISHER. That's none of my business! Annie knows.

PERRY. What?

FISHER. She won't say anything. By the way—the \$20,000—the old man is going to give to me before long.

PERRY. After you get it you can do as you please—but until you get it you will have to keep on your skirts.

FISHER. I won't do anything of the kind. (*Tries to get away.*)

PERRY (*still holding to his skirts*). A bargain's a bargain, and unless you stick to yours, I'll give the whole plot away and you can say good-bye to Annie.

FISHER. And that's your gratitude after all I've done for you—getting into the da—things. (*Goes down R.*) Confound it, I'm dying for a smoke and a drink.

PERRY. Here's a cigar! (*Gives cigar.*) There are matches!

FISHER (Bus., he tries to strike match on seat of pants—can't—then sole of boot—can't stoop. PERRY says "Allow me," strikes match, hands it to FISHER—he sits chair R., lighting his cigar). By the way, don't forget the girls insist on going to the reception to-morrow evening. (*Going up stage.*)

PERRY. If it comes to the worst I'll take to my bed, and you can nurse me.

FISHER (*enjoying his cigar—leans against dining-room door*). I'll nurse you all right.

PERRY. George, be a lady—you should not smoke before a gentleman.

FISHER. Well, I'll show you what kind of lady I am—I'm going to have a (*crosses L.*) highball.

PERRY. You are a lady! (*Crosses R.*)

FISHER. A lady! A perfect lady!

(*Exit L.C. into music-room.*)

PERRY. If I'm ever admitted to a masonic lodge no ordeals can have any terror for me after this!

(*Enter LOTTIE R.2.*)

LOTTIE. Mr. Morrison.

(*Enter MORRISON R.2*)

MORRISON. Hallo, Perry.

PERRY (*absent-mindedly*). Hallo, you've come about the plans?

MORRISON. Not to-day—Lulu and I—

PERRY. Oh—ah—exactly! Now I remember—you want to marry Lulu—you're looking for trouble too. Well, how are you getting on?

MORRISON. That's just what I want to know. Mrs. Bloodgood certainly spoke as if—

PERRY. Oh, she is on your side? Then the thing is as good as settled. You may get your "Bless you, my boy—take her and be happy" at any time—depend upon it. That's the way it was with me. (*Shaking his hand cordially.*) Let me congratulate you.

MORRISON (*smiling*). Thanks! I haven't got Mr. Bloodgood's consent yet—but as we are both ACTIVE MASONS, he won't put any obstacles in our path.

PERRY. Masons. (*Goes to him.*) Morrison, an angel has sent you to me. You must help me.

(*Both go L.*)

MORRISON. With the greatest of pleasure—how?

PERRY. In your capacity as a mason.

MORRISON (*astonished*). Why, you're a mason yourself.

PERRY (*embarrassed*). Certainly—ahem—that is to say—there's no harm in confessing it to you. I intend to become a mason but—I haven't been admitted yet—in fact my application isn't sent in.

MORRISON. But what induced you to pass yourself for one?

PERRY. Well, you see, in the first place, there was my wife to whom I had promised it. (*Crosses R.*) Now, don't laugh—after you're married you'll find it's nothing to laugh at.

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Secondly, there's my father-in-law—you know I want to get the money from him for the extension—

MORRISON (*laughs*). I see—and you thought you'd work him for the good of the order?

PERRY. Yes, and now, to clap the climax—comes that infernal ladies' reception—I'm hopelessly lost if you don't—

MORRISON. I understand—and I'll help you.

PERRY (*delighted*). You're a brick—if you should ever have any trouble with Lulu, I'll do as much for you. (*Going up C.*)

MORRISON (*laughing*). I hope it will never come to that.

PERRY. There's no telling what will happen when a man's married.

(LOTTIE appears at R.2.)

LOTTIE. Mistah Perry, sorr, ye're wanted at the telephone downstairs.

PERRY (*crosses to R.*). All right—I'm coming! (*Exit LOTTIE R.2. To MORRISON.*) Then I can depend on you?

MORRISON. Of course—aren't masons pledged to mutual help?

PERRY. You'll excuse me then.

(*Exit R. 2.*)

(*Enter BLOODGOOD R.I.*)

BLOODGOOD (*aside*). I'd better lie low for a little while. (*Sees MORRISON.*) Do you wish to see my son-in-law?

MORRISON. I suppose I have the pleasure of speaking to Mr. Bloodgood? Allow me to in-

troduce myself—Mrs. Bloodgood has probably spoken to you about me—Morrison—Ernest Morrison.

BLOODGOOD. Jehosaphat! Then you're the—mason?

MORRISON. Yes, my dear Master.

BLOODGOOD (*noticing it.*) Hasn't my wife given you an answer yet?

MORRISON. No, Mr. Bloodgood. The happiness of two people depend on your decision.

BLOODGOOD (*jollies him.*) You seem to be a nice fellow—I believe I can safely confide in you. (*Looks at him critically.*) My dear Mr. Morrison, please sit down. (*Gets chair from back.*) My dear Mr. Morrison. (MORRISON sits on sofa L. BLOODGOOD puts chair R. of sofa L.) Sit down—oh, you are sitting. I like your looks and if Lulu shares your feelings—

MORRISON. I venture to say that she does.

BLOODGOOD. Then, as I have said, I see no objection to your suit.

MORRISON (*jumps up delighted*). My dear sir! (*Rises.*)

BLOODGOOD (*forcing him back into seat*). Sit down, I have a confession to make to you.

MORRISON (*astonished*). Confession?

BLOODGOOD (*looking round anxiously*). I'm not a mason at all!

MORRISON (*dumbfounded*). What? Aren't any of you masons?

BLOODGOOD. I'll give it up.

MORRISON. But why, if I may ask, have you passed yourself off for a member of the order?

BLOODGOOD (*embarrassed*). Well—you see—it's a long story—I promised my wife, some twenty years ago, to join, and somehow never found time.

MORRISON. I see.

BLOODGOOD (*embarrassed*). Yes—it often happens that way. Now, I've got a favor to ask of you. To-morrow will be the ladies' night at the Lodge—I wanted to ask your assistance.

MORRISON (*smiling*). I understand, sir.

BLOODGOOD (*admiringly*). You're very quick to catch the idea.

MORRISON. I'm getting used to it—I mean—

BLOODGOOD (*delighted*). You're a good fellow, I can see that. (*Struck by a sudden idea.*) I'll tell you what Morrison. You must put me up—we expect to settle in New York soon.

MORRISON. I shall be delighted! And to prevent your changing your mind let me have particulars at once—name, address, age and profession.

BLOODGOOD Morrison, (*rise*) I'll do it! (*Puts back chair.*) I'll do it on the spot—I'll go and write it down for you; wait a minute, I'll be back directly. (*Pats him on back.*) My boy, you're a brick. (*Shakes hands with MORRISON repeatedly, then turns and makes a few comic signs without a smile.*) Morrison, you're all right.

(*Exit into music-room L.C.*)

MORRISON. Thank goodness—now I've got both father and mother—the next thing is to find Lulu and tell her of our good luck. (*Turns to go.*)

(*Enter MRS. BLOODGOOD R.I., sees him.*)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Mr. Morrison!

MORRISON (*goes to her—radiant*). Mrs. Bloodgood I've come to—

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*coolly*). I know what you've come for, but I'm sorry to inform you that a marriage between you and Lulu is out of the question.

MORRISON (*dumfounded*). Why?

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*embarrassed*). My husband is strongly opposed—

MORRISON (*more and more amazed*). Your husband! (*Looks off at music-room.*)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Yes. He told me certain things about you—which made me—I mean us,—come to the conclusion that we could not with a clear conscience approve of the match. I am very sorry, but—

(Enter BLOODGOOD from music-room with paper in his hand.)

BLOODGOOD. Now that's attended to. (*Delighted—sees his wife, starts and quickly hides paper—aside.*) The devil!

MRS. BLOODGOOD. My husband will explain everything to you. (*With a cool bow.*) Excuse me, please.

(Exit R.I.)

MORRISON (*angrily*). What does this mean, Mr. Bloodgood? It seems you have been telling your wife things about me which—

BLOODGOOD (*grasps the situation*). Oh, you mean those things? Why, those were merely harmless stories I invented in order to—
(Goes L.)

MORRISON. To what? I am very curious to hear.

BLOODGOOD. Come to my room—we'll talk it over there—I've sneaked a bottle of whiskey—I wanted to drown my sorrows—

(Both go up stage R.)

MORRISON (*smiling*). Sorrows?

BLOODGOOD (*taking MORRISON'S arm*). Come on—you'll soon be a member of the family and then you'll know all about it anyway—it's about a new daughter—

MORRISON. A new daughter? At your time of life?

BLOODGOOD. Oh, no—she dates a long way back. Come on.

(*Exeunt R.C.*)

(LOTTIE *enters and looks round.*)

LOTTIE. It's not here the masther is. (*Goes to door R.I. calling in*) Mrs. Perry—Mrs. Perry, where are yez?

(EVA *enters R.I.E. with MRS. BLOODGOOD and FISHER from D.R. smoking cigar.*)

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*knitting*). What's the matter, Lottie?

(FISHER *comes down R. MRS. BLOODGOOD catches sight of him, he tries to retreat.*)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Ah, Fanchon, you're just

the girl I wanted to see. (*Sniffs.*) Do you smell smoke?

FISHER (*who has hidden cigar and comes C., sniffs.*) Yes; does madam smoke?

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Certainly not.

FISHER. In my country ladies often smoke.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. Not in mine. (FISHER drops cigar in fish globe, L. corner.) Come here, let me see how much you know about knitting. (Takes FISHER, gives him knitting —he sits on sofa L.) Now put this under your arm. (Places knitting.) Now take this in that hand, and this in the other—and now you take two up and one down.

FISHER. Two up and one down.

EVA (*has spoken to LOTTIE meanwhile.*) You say a policeman wants to speak to Mr. Perry? Well, show him in.

LOTTIE (*with a groan*). The Saints guard us, they are after him!

EVA. After whom?

LOTTIE. The masther.

EVA (*with a start*). What for?

LOTTIE. Sure an' he's a freemason, ain't he?

EVA (*annoyed*). Oh, nonsense—ask the man in.

LOTTIE (*going tearfully*). Didn't I know it, whin me big toe ached me ahl mornin'. (*Shows in POLICEMAN then.*)

(*Exits R.2 shaking her head.*)

POLICEMAN. Is Mr. Frank Perry in?

EVA. My husband is out.

POLICEMAN. Are you Mrs. Perry?

EVA. Yes.

POLICEMAN. Then I can hand it to you just

as well. (*Hands her official-looking document.*) This is a summons for your husband to appear at the Police Court to-morrow morning. Good-day, ma'am.

(*Exit R.2.*)

EVA (*reads*). "Frank Perry—assault—Police Court." (*FISHER whistles.*) What can my husband have to do with the police?

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*drily*). It is your duty, as his wife, to find out.

EVA (*between sobs*). Frank is deceiving me—instead of going to the Lodge he has been running about the streets—goodness knows in what company.

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*sharply*). Nothing about men surprises me any more—but I'll attend to him!

(PERRY enters R.2 with pretended unconcern.

FISHER telegraphs to him behind MRS. BLOODGOOD'S back.)

PERRY. Lottie tells me a policeman was here just now. What did he want?

MRS. BLOODGOOD. You know what he wanted! (*Holds document open before his eyes.*) And we know too!

PERRY (*with a forced laugh*). Somebody's been getting himself into trouble, eh?

EVA (*sorrowfully—goes to him*). So you've deceived me—me, who trusted you so implicitly.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. But you've made your reckoning without the host!

PERRY. Dearest Eva, don't you think—

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*indignantly*). Of course you'll try to lie out of this! (*Points to document.*)

PERRY (*with a nervous laugh*). Ha—aha—ha!

FISHER (*enjoying the situation—aside*). I'd give something to know how. (*Laughs.*)

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*sternly*, to FISHER). I don't see anything to laugh at. Knit!

FISHER. Nit.

(*He does so frantically.*)

PERRY. Let me tell you—ha, ha, ha—the funny part of it is, that it wasn't me at all!

EVA. Not you?

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*with a sneer*). I suppose you think we've forgotten how to read! (*Holding up document.*) What is *that*? Does it say "Frank Perry" or doesn't it?

PERRY. It does—but—er—it was somebody else who took my name.

EVA (*goes to PERRY, crosses to and fro*). Do you expect me to believe that?

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*scornfully*). And who was the culprit, if you please? The great unknown, I suppose!

PERRY (*regaining his composure*). Oh, no, mother. He called on me yesterday and explained the whole matter. The fact is—he was —er—a little—under the weather, and when they asked him for his name—he gave a card, which—er—happened to be mine—er—and—er—then—

FISHER (*aside*). He woke up!

PERRY. He—er—he apologized to me—what

could I say under the circumstances?

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*ironically*). And what is the name of this friend of yours?

EVA. Yes, what is his name? (*Rises, to R.*)

PERRY. Oh—you want to know his name. (*As if trying to recall it.*) What is his name—er—er—his name is—(*sees FISHER, who is laughing at him.*) George Fisher!

FISHER (*forgetting himself, jumps up.*). I?

EVA { (look at FISHER in amaze-
and } ment.)

MRS. BLOODGOOD What?

FISHER (*quickly recovering—resumes his assumed voice.*). I—I dropped one of the stitches! (*Look on floor for it.*)

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*decisively*). You'll have to produce that gentleman, and very promptly, too, before I believe one word of this story. (*Cross up stage to R.2.*)

EVA. Yes—and if you can't clear yourself from this accusation, I shall apply for a separation. (*To door R.2.*)

(MRS. BLOODGOOD goes up and off with her, condoling with her. Both exeunt R.2.)

FISHER (*throws down his knitting, excited—goes to PERRY.*). Confound you, how dare you drag my name into an affair of this kind?

PERRY. I couldn't think of any other.

FISHER (*crosses R.*). That doesn't do me any good.

PERRY. George, do me a favor—be a man again—just for a quarter of an hour—so I can introduce you to them.

FISHER. I'll be hanged if I let you make a cat's paw of me any longer.

PERRY (*up and down—imploringly*). George, like a good fellow—

FISHER (*calming down*). Can't you find somebody else to impersonate me?

PERRY (*crosses R.*). No, on account of Lottie—she knows you—she'd give the whole thing away. Hang it, man, you were in such a deuce of a hurry a while ago to get back into your trousers.

FISHER. Ah, that was different! What will Annie think of me? Imagine her feelings—her future husband indicted for disorderly conduct!

PERRY (*dragging him off up R.*). Come on—I'll send for your clothes.

FISHER. Don't you smile— (*Expostulating.*)

(*Both exeunt quickly R.2*)

(BLOODGOOD and MORRISON enter from R. C. arm-in-arm.)

BLOODGOOD (*in very good humor*). Well, Morrison, it's all settled, eh?

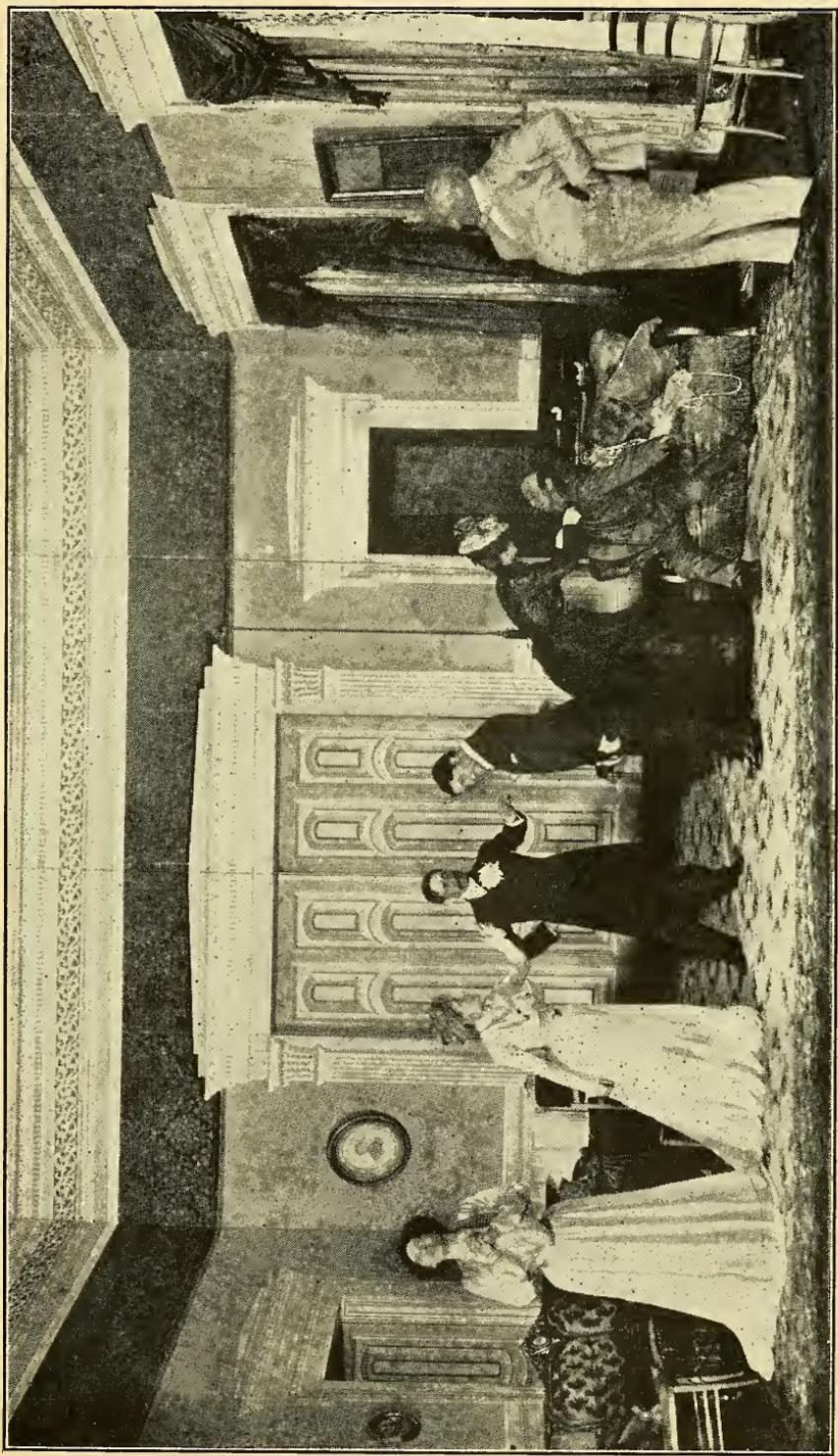
MORRISON. Depend on me! (*In doorway.*)

BLOODGOOD. But be off now, my wife might suspect, if she saw us together.

MORRISON. Good-bye!

(*Exit R.2*)

BLOODGOOD (*slightly elated*). Thank the Lord my troubles are over at last. I feel like another man. Ha, ha, they have got to get up pretty early to catch me napping!



(HALTON *enters R.2.*)

HALTON. Good evening—how are you?

BLOODGOOD (*aside*). That old bore again!
(Crosses, goes R.)

HALTON. I gave my wife the slip so as to have a couple of hours' quiet chat with you about the Lodge. I want you to give me a few points about the initiation.

BLOODGOOD (*up and down stage impatiently*.) Can't you wait till the time comes? We haven't got as far as that yet.

HALTON (*reproachfully*). Whose fault is it? Yours! You haven't put me through the second test—I'm prepared for the most severe ordeal, no matter how hard it is.

BLOODGOOD. Oh—are you? Then—(*advancing to him with dignity*) Can you keep your mouth shut for one hour?

HALTON. Yes.

BLOODGOOD. That will be your second test.

HALTON. (*Buttonholes BLOODGOOD*.) Oh! is that all? Well, it's as good as done.

(BLOODGOOD *goes round sofa L.* HALTON *follows*.)

It's easy enough for me to hold my tongue.

(BLOODGOOD *tries to get away from him, walks around sofa, HALTON follows him*.)

If I were one of those talkative fellows now, that would be different—but I'm all right. This house might collapse, the world come to an end, or you might stand on your head in order to

get me to talk—you wouldn't succeed, I tell you that at once, I've—

BLOODGOOD (*takes out his watch.* HALTON *takes out his and compares, and puts his finger to HALTON'S lips.*) Hush—the test has begun.

(HALTON *puts hand over mouth in sign of silence, and makes sign as before.*)

(*Aside.*) That must be a new one.

(HALTON *sits sofa L.*)

Remember, one hour.

(HALTON *settles comfortably on sofa L. and picks up a book.* BLOODGOOD *lights a cigar.* Enter MRS. HALTON—somewhat countrified in appearance.)

MRS. HALTON (c.) Good afternoon, sir. Excuse me, is my husband here? Why, there he is! I thought as much (*To HALTON.*) Did you have your talk about the Lodge with Mr. Bloodgood? Why don't you introduce me?

HALTON (*silently shakes his head.*) Um—

MRS. HALTON (*amazed*). What's the matter—why don't you answer me?

HALTON (*same BUS.*). Um—

MRS. HALTON (*goes to BLOODGOOD.*) For goodness' sake—what's the matter with my husband?

BLOODGOOD (*suppressing his merriment*). I can't make it out—he's been sitting like that for half an hour.

MRS. HALTON. My husband? His tongue generally goes like a windmill!

BLOODGOOD. It is funny. But I hope our combined efforts will be successful in restoring his powers of speech to him. What would you suggest? Shall I kick him?

MRS. HALTON (*goes to HALTON, endearingly*). John—Johnnie, dear! Don't you know your little wife? (*After a pause—angrily.*) You old idiot! (*In despair crosses R.*) What is the matter? He's a changed man. At home, I have only to ask him the least little thing, and he'll answer at once, "What is it Angeline?"

BLOODGOOD (*with a start*). What name did you say?

MRS. HALTON. Angeline. My name is Angeline.

BLOODGOOD (*very excited*). And your maiden name?

MRS. HALTON. Fichu!

BLOODGOOD (*looks at her wildly*). Ange-line! Then you are not dead?

MRS. HALTON (*astonished*). Why should I be dead?

BLOODGOOD. She lives ! Angeline lives ! ! Hurrah ! ! ! I must kiss you! (*Rushes towards her: chases her round table R., she putting chairs in his way—she seeks shelter behind husband.*)

MRS. HALTON. Are you crazy?

BLOODGOOD. Why, Angeline, don't you know me? I'm your Amos.

MRS. HALTON (*incredulously, comes forward L.C.*). Little Amos Bloodgood?

BLOODGOOD. Yes—to whom you wrote you were going to kill yourself.

MRS. HALTON. Is it possible?

BLOODGOOD (*delighted*). But you didn't kill yourself, did you?

MRS. HALTON. No, I thought better of it!

HALTON. He's trying his best, but he can't make me talk.

BLOODGOOD. And what do you think? Such a coincidence—Fanchon is here!

MRS. HALTON. Fanchon?

BLOODGOOD. Don't you know—my—your—our Fanchon! Our daughter ! ! !

MRS. HALTON (*indignantly*). Excuse me—this is carrying the joke too far! (*Crosses, goes R.*)

HALTON (*laughing aside*). A daughter, too! He's making the most desperate efforts—but it won't work.

BLOODGOOD. You take a load from my heart. Oh, Angeline, I'm so happy! I must tell my wife —won't she be surprised. (*Calling off.*) Caroline—Caroline!

(*Rushes off R.2.*)

HALTON (*aside*). He is going to get reinforcements.

MRS. HALTON (*goes savagely to HALTON*). And you sit there like a dummy, while your wife is being insulted. Speak, John, say something—I shall do something to you!

(*HALTON takes out his watch and shrugs his shoulders tries to explain in pantomime that he cannot speak.*)

(*Wrings her hands in despair*). Oh, I shall go crazy!

(*Up stage then back of sofa to HALTON—up and down.*)

(BLOODGOOD *re-enters*, R.2., *much excited*, dragging MRS. BLOODGOOD after him.)

BLOODGOOD. Come on, Carrie, come on!

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*struggling*). What is the matter with you Amos?

BLOODGOOD (*dramatically*). Now, you shall see what an injustice you have been doing me for twenty years! (*Points to MRS. HALTON*.) Look! Do you know who that is?

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*coldly*). I have not the pleasure—

BLOODGOOD. It is the dead—Angeline—er—I mean, the one we thought was dead—the one whose bones you've raked up every day.

HALTON (*aside, holding his sides with laughter*). A regular dime novel.

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*with a sneer*). I suppose you got some one to come here and palm herself as Angeline? Mercy me! Have I got into a lunatic asylum? (*Go up L.*)

BLOODGOOD (*to MRS. HALTON*). You disown your daughter? Then let the voice of nature speak! (*Goes quickly to door R. 2 and calls*.) Come here a moment, Fanchon!

(FISHER enters unconcerned in man's clothes.)

BLOODGOOD. Here, madam, is your daughter!

MRS. HALTON (*alarmed*). My—daughter?

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*gazing at FISHER in surprise*). Why, that's—that's

HALTON (*unable to restrain his laughter*). I shall choke! (*Buries his head in cushions and kicks his legs*).

FISHER. I beg your pardon—

BLOODGOOD (*in amazement to FISHER*). A

man! (*Bewildered and scared.*) How did you get in?

FISHER (*very much embarrassed*). I—I—wanted—I had—a—am—

BLOODGOOD. You are—this marvelous like-ness! Confess it! You are her brother!

FISHER (*desperately*). Yes—her twin brother!

BLOODGOOD (*with a cry*). Her twin! Ange-line, we've got twins! (*Crosses L.*)

(HALTON *slaps himself, doubles up on sofa, nearly killing himself with laughter.*)

MRS. HALTON. Twins —(*Enraged.*) This is too much!

MRS. BLOODGOOD. I should say it was—a new child every day!

MRS. HALTON. I can't stand this any longer! (*Rushes to HALTON with clinched fists*). Speak—or I shall slap you!

(MRS. BLOODGOOD *goes up stage.*)

(PERRY *enters R.2., talking to EVA*)

PERRY. Certainly—you shall convince your-self! (*Sees FISHER.*) Ah, there he is! My dear Eva, mother, allow me to introduce to you Mr. George Fisher—the friend whose existence you denied.

(Enter ANNIE and LULU R.2.)

BLOODGOOD (*jumping up*). George Fisher! Annie's actor chap! (*Rise.*)

LULU. Annie—look! (*Points to FISHER.*)

ANNIE (*pretends surprise*). It is extraordinary.

MRS. BLOODGOOD. What does all this mean?

(MORRISON has entered R. 2. unnoticed and stands up stage watching the scene smiling —comes down.)

MORRISON. Permit me to explain, ladies. As a mason I understand at once that all this had been arranged by our Worshipful Master (*points to BLOODGOOD*) as a test for the new mason, Mr. Halton.

(ALL look at BLOODGOOD.)

BLOODGOOD (*going to C.—has recovered his equanimity—somewhat impressively*). Er—of course, brother Morrison understands it. Didn't I arrange it capitally? None of you had the least suspicion.

(ANNIE crosses to FISHER, EVA to PERRY.)

HALTON (*with his watch in hand—taps BLOODGOOD on the shoulder smilingly*). With one exception Master! !(Proudly to the others) He's been carrying on for an hour to get me to speak, but John Halton knows how to keep his mouth shut! (*Goes to L.*)

MRS. BLOODGOOD. I take it all back, Amos—forgive me! I shall be the proudest woman at the ladies' reception to-morrow night.

(BLOODGOOD coughs warningly.)

MORRISON. I am sorry, Mrs. Bloodgood, but

the reception has been postponed.

LULU
EVA } (together). That's too bad!
ANNIE

BLOODGOOD (*cheerfully*.) Never mind, children, we'll have a little reception at home to welcome a new member into the family, Mr. Morrison.

MRS. BLOODGOOD.. What! After all you told me about him.

BLOODGOOD (*quickly*). Oh, that was a cousin of his who went to Canada.

MRS. BLOODGOOD (*to MORRISON and LULU*). Then I withdraw my opposition. (*Joins their hands.*)

PERRY (*aside to BLOODGOOD*). Well, Master, how about the \$20,000 Fanchon was to get?

FISHER. Papa!

BLOODGOOD (*aside to PERRY*). You shall have it—it's worth that much to get rid of Angeline.

HALTON (*Thumb in ear, wriggles fingers.*) Master!

BLOODGOOD. No, sir. Not in my Lodge.

CURTAIN.

PROPERTY PLOT

ACT I

Perfume Spray (on mantel)
Blue Prints (Morrison)
Breakfast Tray, Coffee Pot, Rolls, etc. (Lottie)
Note Book (Perry)
Whiskey bottle and glass (Perry)
Card case (Travers)
Paper money (Perry)
Paper money (Fisher)
Letters (on desk)
Photograph (on mantel)
Books (in book case)
2 Travelling bags (Eva)
Mirror (over mantel)
Telegram (Lottie)
Auto horn (off R.)

ACT II

Newspapers (Perry and Bloodgood)
Cigars (Perry and Bloodgood)
Matches (Perry)
Whiskey bottle, glasses and seltzer (on sideboard in dining room)
Check book (on desk)
Manuscript of play (Travers)
Plate of sandwiches, whiskey bottle and glass on tray (Eva)

ACT III

Goldfish in bowl on pedestal. (Do not use live fish.
They can be of tin or wood.)
Sewing material (Eva, Fisher, Annie, Lulu)
Sheet of paper (Bloodgood)
Knitting material (Mrs. Bloodgood)
Warrant (Police officer)

NOTES ON PRODUCTION

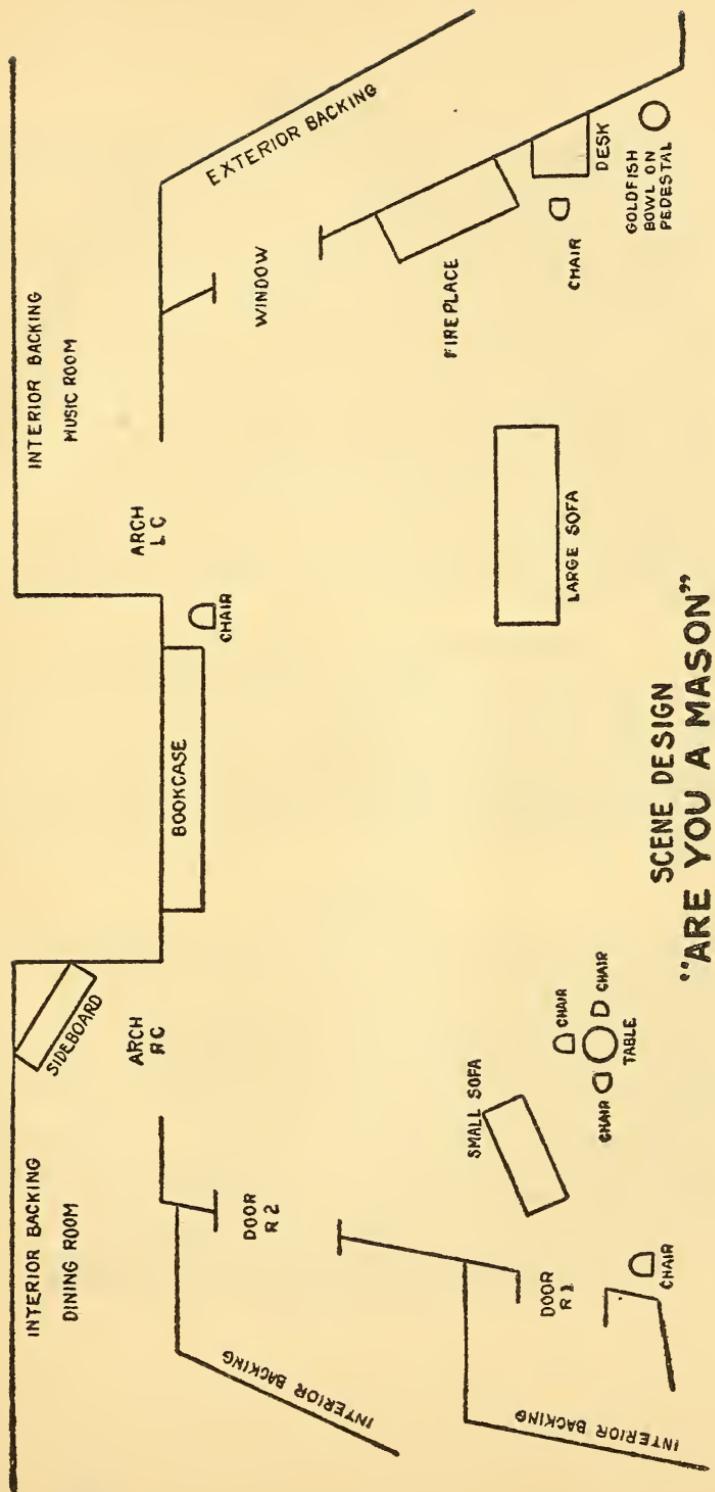
Descriptions of dresses can be altered in accord with the latest fashions.

Lively music at rise of each act to be kept forte until curtain is well up; then gradually die off and cease.

Lively music to begin pianissimo about four speeches before end of each act; gradually crescendo to forte at the finish.

Lights full up on stage all during action of play. It will also help the play if lights are kept full up in the auditorium during action of play.

As this play is pure farce it must be played very snappily in order to get the full amusement out of the performance.



Dulcy

Comedy in 3 acts. By George S. Kaufman and Marc Connelly (with a bow to Franklin P. Adams), 8 males, 3 females. 1 interior. Costumes, modern. Plays 2½ hours.

In her determination to help her husband and friends Dulcy plans a week-end party. They are an ill-assorted group, such as only a Dulcinea could summon about her. Their brief association becomes a series of hilarious tragedies. It is Dulcy's final blunder which unexpectedly crowns her efforts with success.

Meanwhile she has all but ruined her husband's plans to put through a big merger with a rich capitalist. Among her guests is a rapturous scenario writer who conspires to elope with the daughter of the capitalist, who loathes motion pictures. The rich young man from Newport, who Dulcy thinks may be useful in assisting the capitalist's wife to write for the films, turns out to be an escaped lunatic. The ex-convict butler steals a necklace. Everything goes wrong. But the most exquisite torture she inflicts is when she invites the scenario writer to recite one of his hectic plots to music played by the lunatic. It is with this that the play reaches its highest level of satirical fun.

"Dulcy" ran for a season in New York, and is now on tour throughout the United States and Canada. Royalty, \$25.00. Price, 75 cents.

Come Out of the Kitchen

Comedy in 3 acts, adapted by A. E. Thomas from the story by Alice Duer Miller. 6 males, 5 females. 3 interiors. Costumes, modern. Plays 2½ hours.

"Come Out of the Kitchen," with Ruth Chatterton in the leading role, made a notable success on its production by Henry Miller in New York. It was also a great success in London. A most ingenious and entertaining comedy. We strongly recommend it for amateur production. Royalty, \$25.00. Price, 75 cents.

Kempy

Comedy in 3 acts, by J. C. Nugent and Elliott Nugent. 4 males, 4 females. 1 interior throughout. Costumes, modern. Plays 2½ hours.

The story is about a highfalutin daughter who in a fit of pique marries the young plumber-architect, who comes to fix the water pipe, just because he "understands" her, having read her book and sworn to marry the authoress. But in that story lies all the humor that kept the audience laughing every second.

The amateur acting rights are reserved for the present in all cities and towns where there are stock companies. Royalty will be quoted on application for those cities and towns where it may be presented by amateurs. Price, 75 cents.

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